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2018

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perspective

THE YEAR OF THE ATMOSPHERICS

BY HUMAIR ISHTIAQ

IN a manner of speaking, 2018 was quite a year. It is only fair that it should not be taken or described or discussed as 'one year'; a better marker would be 365 days; or, still better, 8,760 hours. Indeed, there were 525,600 minutes or 31.5 million seconds in the year, but using them as markers would generally be considered overplaying one's hand. The temptation to do that, however, is genuine for there were days when every hour mattered, and hours when every minute mattered, and minutes where every second mattered. It was THAT kind of a year.

With so much happening so fast and with electronic media in overdrive and social media in hyper-drive, almost nothing remained relevant for any length of time during 2018. It is tough to recall, for instance, that it was this very year when the murder of eight-year-old Zainab jolted all and sundry. SSP Rao Anwar hogged the limelight with his escapade. And Nehal Hashmi found himself in jail over contempt of court. Also, Bushra Maneka became the latest name to be discussed in all kinds of social and political circles, and Reham Khan struggled to sustain public interest despite coming out with an autobiography which was more a biography of her former husband.

The PTI government, which took over almost two months into the latter half of the year, was talked about so much — and it gave so much to everyone to talk about (helicopter et al!) — that it is hard to remember that when the year started, the country had a PML-N government in office. And, yes, there were the caretakers. Nawaz Sharif became the PML-N Quaid for life and Shahbaz replaced him as the party president, but as the year progressed, the latter ended up replacing the elder brother in terms of confinement. Nothing else mattered till both found themselves together in internment. It was big news when Chaudhry Nisar quit the party, but he was not even a footprint on the 2018 balance sheet. It was that kind of a year.

And what about the RTS? Remember? It captured the fancy of the nation for days when it happened and was the biggest news on election night — and for few nights after — but the Result Transmission System and everything surrounding it soon lost conversational currency. This is not surprising, however, when you look at it against the backdrop of the sacking of Justice Shaukat Siddiqui for having accused the ISI of interference in the judicial process. It happened in the last quarter of the year and the judge did talk of going public with his stance on the matter, but apparently, along with the masses and the media, he also lost interest in the case in no time. Also in the last quarter, the CNG prices per unit for the first time soared past the 100-rupee mark and there was grumbling about what might happen to this, that and everything else. As the year drew to a close, however, price was not an issue for there was no CNG for the consumers before it was partially restored. Even then, domestic consumers continued to report disruption in the supply of natural gas. In many areas the pressure was so low that it was impossible to cook. And this was a concern for those who had something to cook. There were many who struggled on that basic count in the wake of the anti-encroachment drive and nose-diving rupee that swept away livelihoods. Yes, it was that kind of a year.

Come to think of it, television talk shows — and the antics of their hosts — have been there for a while and there was no change on that count in 2018. And that makes one wonder what it actually was that allowed nothing to stay relevant

THERE WERE DAYS WHEN EVERY HOUR MATTERED, AND HOURS WHEN EVERY MINUTE MATTERED, AND MINUTES WHERE EVERY SECOND MATTERED. IT WAS THAT KIND OF A YEAR.

beyond days; sometimes even hours. Two possible elements come to mind. One, there were happenings worth a few years that happened in just one. Two, social media pundits (and trolls) had a field day finding old clips to generate ever more interesting and colourful contrasts to whatever one had said or did. From the most known of the known to those on the political periphery, almost everyone seemed to have said or done something in 2018 that totally contradicted what they had said earlier. Mian Nawaz Sharif shed new light on, say, Al-Azizia and the Qatari prince, and the government in office kept things lively on fronts that would take some time counting. As a corollary, the reactions of the diehards (and trolls) on both sides of the fence were that much more intense. Any social scientist trying to understand Pakistanis through their social media output during the year would not be wrong in concluding that the people here are basically intolerant and seriously abusive. At least this is how they — the 'youthias' and the 'patwaris' — behaved on social media; saving their hilarious and contemptuous best for the 'lifafiyays'.

So, then, what are the key words that might define the year that it was? Naya Pakistan? U-Turn? Accountability? They are all decent competitors, but in case 'chaos' is too heavy a word for your taste to describe the year, how about 'confusion'? Forget everything else and let's focus on the core. Is the "economic crisis over" or are there "tough days ahead"? Prime Minister Imran Khan and Finance Minister Asad Umar alternated the two statements repeatedly within a couple of months. All the optics — from four VIPs sharing a single *anda-paratha* to people offering prayers in their offices — and all the sounds — of making Pakistan greener, better, smarter — remained just that; sounds and optics generating atmospherics which naturally are no replacement for a clearheaded direction.

With a government that has not completed even 150 days in power, it is a fair argument that it needs time to put in place whatever it wants to put in place. Even though it has itself talked of the possibility of mid-term polls within this short period, the argument remains valid. As is said of electoral politics, a candidate is someone who gets money from the rich and votes from the poor to protect them for each other. Imran Khan has done the first part quite successfully; will he be able to protect one from the other with matching success? This is a question 2019 will have to answer.

POSTSCRIPT: These lines were written on Dec 27 by which time Karachi had seen three hit-and-run political murders, and there were a little over four days still left in 2018. They were not just a little over four days. In the context of the year that was, they were 100 hours, or 6,000 minutes, or 360,000 seconds. At sign-off, it was difficult to say whether the year was actually behind us. Anything might have happened in the intervening time. Yes, 2018 was THAT kind of a year. ■

newsmakers

A horror story that put humanity to shame

BY ATIF KHAN

IN a year of political and economic turmoil, the collective conscience of the country was put to test early in the year when a girl in the Punjab town of Kasur, the body of a seven-year-old girl was found dead in a garbage dump. As it turned out, it was a rape-and-kill story. Police, as is usual, said it had any clue. Others complained that it simply wanted to sweep the whole thing under the rug. Zainab Amin had gone to the local seminary on January 4 before she disappeared. The year clearly got off to a wrong start. Her parents were not in the country, having gone perform Umrah. Her maternal uncle filed an FIR and five days after Zainab's disappearance, the unthinkable was conveyed to the family. But was it really 'unthinkable' for the locals – at least the local police? After all, it was the 12th such incident in the city's two-kilometre radius within a year.

The innocence of Zainab jolted the nation like little else had done earlier. The locals were furious. The nation at large was enraged. Headlines screamed blood. People took to the streets and #JusticeforZainab became a rallying cry for millions online. Imran Ali, the culprit, was eventually caught, prosecuted and hanged after a lengthy yet speedy trial, bringing a semblance of closure in a case in which the family members, and not the police, collected the crucial evidence that finally led to the arrest in the first place.

Closure though it was, the ghastly crime was – and is – a wake-up call on



All images: Dawn/White Star Archives

the social scale. It is surely not a one-off case. During the course of the year itself, other equally horrifying cases were reported from Karachi slums to Mardan, Dera Ismail Khan, Bahawalpur and Taxila. How many would have gone unreported, unnoticed is more than mere conjecture.

Such cases highlight the collective failure of society to protect its children. The reasons behind the crime remain prevalent and so the matter remains relevant. People are scared at the thought of leaving their children out of their sight. Neighbours, once a trusted entity in society, have become suspects. Even relatives. No child is safe. People have talked – and they had reason to talk – of a civil law that is lax and its implementation even more so. A step in that direction may well be a fitting tribute to Zainab's memory. ■

Stepping into big shoes

PAKISTAN has a history of illustrious First Ladies. Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, Vigarun Nisa Noon, Nusrat Bhutto, Kalsoom Nawaz, to name a few. In 2018, Bushra Imran joined the illustrious list. Compared to the screen time Imran Khan got during the year, his wife – third, by the way – generated a lot more interest in media and social circles with almost negligible exposure. Coming from a world that was entirely different to his, Bushra, herself a divorcee, is known to be a faith-healer. But more than anything else, it was her attire that got the world buzzing. Compared to Jemima and Reham, she is definitely a whole new phenomenon more interested in media abstinence than indulgence. Her lone television interview gave the hounds something to sniff on. And her words underlined the gulf that



separates her followers and detractors on social media. All gloves were off. Some found her clear-headed, confident, mature and intelligent. The others ... well, everything but. More than what she said or didn't say, the Twitterati were fascinated by her attire, which was more like the North African *al-Hayek* than the traditional *burqa* or Arabic *abaya*. Probably that is why she was able to create some chatter in distant Algeria as well. ■

The 30-Under-30 list

THOSE in search of a 'good' and 'positive' story about Pakistan and Pakistanis during the year, one headline brought a smile to faces across all divides; as many as nine Pakistanis made it to the Forbes 30-Under-30 list. Truly great even if you are not willing to go out of your way to be 'positive'. The most public-friendly name on the list was that of Momina Mustehsan who later was floored locally for the *CoCo Korina* massacre, but that is another tale. Also on the list were Sadia Bashir, 29, founder of the PixelArt Games Academy; Muhammad Shaheer Niazi, 17, a boy wonder who found a way to photograph the movement of ions; Hamza Farrukh, 24, founder of Bondh-E-Shams, the solar based water extraction system;

Syed Faizan Hussain, 24, of Perihelion Systems that aims at improving lives through technology; Adnan and Adeel Shaffi of mobile phone pricing app, Price Oye; and Muhammad Asad Raza and Abraham Ali Shah, 23, of Neurostic that works on technology in health-care services.

In its assessment, *Forbes* said: "It's probably fair to say that Pakistan often gets a raw deal when it comes to international media coverage, with headlines usually dominated by themes like religious extremism and terrorism ... this South Asian nation has many more positive stories that don't see the light of day, such as the incredible pool of young talent pushing boundaries in numerous industries and disciplines." So, will the next nine – or 19 – please stand up! ■

Dedicated to clearing misunderstandings

ARCHBISHOP Joseph Coutts, of Karachi, became Pakistan's second Cardinal ever when he was elevated to the post by Pope Francis at the Vatican. The first Pakistan so honoured was Cardinal Joseph Marie Anthony Cordeiro in 1973.

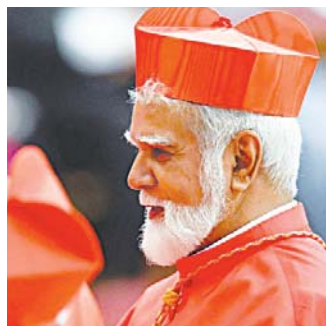
Coutts is comfortable with English, Italian, German, French, Urdu, Punjabi and Sindhi languages, and has been actively involved in inter-faith dialogue with Muslims. He is also the president of Pakistan Catholic Bishops Conference, and he still remains the Archbishop of Karachi.

Born in Amritsar in 1945, he grew up in Karachi and Lahore. Coutts initially had pretty worldly ambitions and wanted to become a fighter pilot. "There was the heroic Pakistan Air Force fighter pilot Cecil Chaudhry, a few years senior to me, who I used to look up to," he said in a media talk.

About the responsibilities that are associated with the title, he said: "There was Cardinal Joseph Marie Anthony Cordeiro from Pakistan before me. He was known as a great educationist. I have taught too, but I am not an educationist really. As Cardinal, I want to

take what Pope Francis did in terms of clearing misunderstandings among the people of various faiths by creating religious harmony and tolerance among the people here."

Coutts was one of the 14 new cardinals appointed this year, coming from Iraq, Pakistan, Madagascar and Japan. The appointments came as the Argentine pontiff gradually shaped a less European College of Cardinals. In the event of a Conclave of Cardinals to name a new pope, 11 of the new 14, being under 80 years of age, would be eligible to take part. ■





newsmakers

Smiling amid chaos

THE country has achieved Utopia. Or maybe it has simply given up. Whatever the case, Pakistanis are happy. In fact, it is the happiest nation in the entire region. This is one happy piece of news for anyone looking to be happy. On the global scale, going by the sixth World Happiness Report, Pakistanis were the 75th happiest bunch of people anywhere on the planet. The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's annual survey ranked the countries on six indicators: income per capita, life expectancy, social support, freedom, generosity and corruption.

The report declared Finland to be the world's happiest country whereas Burundi bagged the last position. Bangladesh stood at 115. Sri Lanka, a step behind. China could make it to 86; Iran 106; India, a distant 133; and Afghanistan was ranked 145 on the index. It was a smiling, happy Pakistan having to put up with a brooding, sulking neighbourhood. That sounds good, right?

Of the interesting observations in the study was that the 10 happiest

countries in the overall rankings also scored highest on immigrant happiness. But that was an issue for Pakistan in its early years – the immigrants, that is – but that is not much of a factor except for the talk of 'Mohajirs' in the political lexicon. Talking of 'immigrants', all we know is that Pakistanis who get immigrant status in other countries are very happy, and those who get their cases approved find it very hard to wipe off the broad grin on their faces which lasts quite a while. Let's leave it at that.

Coming back to the report, it was truly wonderful. But it also made one wonder what exactly did we do to deserve this?

The disclaimer on the website concerned might address some issues. The World Happiness Report, it says, was compiled "by a group of independent experts acting in their personal capacities. Any views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of any organisation, agency or programme of the United Nations". Hmmm. That's an interesting catch. But, well, let's be happy while we can. ■

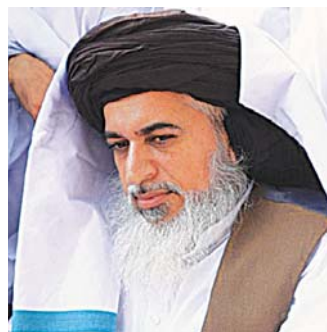


Not quite a spent force

INITIALY in 'protective' custody, Khadim Hussain Rizvi was said to be facing serious charges for his actions and, more importantly, words in the wake of the verdict issued by the Supreme Court in a blasphemy case against Aasia Bibi. There was a lot of hue and cry over his alleged public incitements and comparisons were made with others who were declared anti-state for having done or said much less.

The banner Tahreek e Labaik Pakistan, or the TLP, grabbed international attention not long ago. Rizvi took the country by storm, literally, in late 2017 when he along with his supporters occupied the Faizabad Interchange. Administratively, the Faizabad fiasco led to the rise of Khadim Hussain Rizvi, which, in 2018, led to the TLP garnering more than two million votes and two provincial assembly seats from Karachi. That is what some considered to be the peak of this rather meteoric rise within no time. There were suggestions that the appeal of the man may have hit the plateau. But then came the verdict and the man was at it again.

Khadim Hussain Rizvi's emergence onto the religio-political landscape was troubling and it was so mostly because



of the administration's reluctance to tackle his rhetoric. He has unleashed his forces in the tenure of two different governments. And neither handled it the way people thought they should have. And that did set tongues wagging.

The TLP's appeal to the Barelvi vote bank, however, was limited to the 2018 elections. Already, there are splinter groups and Khadim Hussain Rizvi's arrest can add to that breakup, provided it is more than 'protective custody'. But as the year took its bow, nobody could say for sure if Khadim Hussain Rizvi was a spent force already. ■

Crumbling under its own weight

THERE used to be a Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) that rule urban Sindh like no one ever did before. The complete hold (stranglehold?) on such a massive scale gave it a pivotal role in national politics as well to the extent that it became for a long a while the king-maker which could make or break a government. Then there came a Haqiqi faction followed by a change in nomenclature with 'Muttahida' replacing 'Muhajir'. Years later, there came a splinter group called the Pak Sarzameen Party (PSP). In 2018, there were MQM-London and MQM-Pakistan, and within no time, there were MQM-Pakistan-PIB and MQM-Pakistan-Bahudrabad. And they all fell flat in the general elections held during the year in the face of a number of factors, but, in effect, the monolith had crumbled under its own weight.

The once powerful MQM is now all over the place, divided into parts, sub-parts and more. There was no one to pick the pieces of this broken entity. The rise, stagnation and fall of the party is truly a fascinating journey in Political Science. In 1991, it was the third strongest force in the National Assembly, and while it was in power even in 2018, it was a mere technicality. The public spat and tears in the wake of



the struggle between Amir Khan and Farooq Sattar was truly an embarrassment. Thankfully, they at least decided to contest the general elections on a single platform, fielding candidates from 32 NA constituencies. It won all of 7; a mere 22 per cent. More shocking – even in this grim scenario – was their wipeout in Karachi that forced it to join the coalition as a junior partner that was made to behave like a very junior partner.

Towards the end of the year, there were hit-and-run shootings that claimed the lives of a couple of PSP activists and a former MNA who had resigned from the basic membership of the party a few months earlier. Things were a lot less certain about what might happen next to life in the metropolis as the year came to a close. ■

The #MeToo moves on

PAKISTAN entered the #MeToo era when actress and singer Meesha Shafi accused fellow artist Ali Zafar of harassing her physically and sexually. The accusations were made at a time when Ali Zafar was about to release his movie, *Teeja in Trouble*. Protestors gathered outside cinema houses to demand action where they were instead met by cinema's private security and the singer-actor's fellow artist friends who came in his defence. Ali Zafar himself took to Twitter to deny the acquisitions and soon a legal battle started between the two.

In neighbouring India, the watershed moment came when former actress Tanushree Dutta accused Nana Patekar of sexual harassment. Anu Malik, the music director, was also accused and was suspended from the jury panel of a famous reality TV singing contest.

Lists started being circulated and soon it spread to politics where M.J. Akbar, a senior journalist who at the time was holding the portfolio of Junior Minister for External Affairs, had to face the music.

While things were cooling down a bit in South Asia, Hollywood was in



no such mood. Bill Cosby, one of the biggest names to have their names muddled, got sentenced to 10 years in prison. Harvey Weinstein was indicted on rape and criminal sex act charges, and there were other cases as well.

However, it was Kevin Spacey who decided to go down fighting. Set to be charged with indecent assault and battery within days, he released a video titled 'Let Me Be Frank' doing his famous *House of Cards* avatar of Frank Underwood. It earned him much ridicule than he possibly expected. ■



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newsmakers

It was hot, hot, hot!

GLOBAL temperatures continued to rise and Pakistan was no exception on that count. But it indeed an exception when on April 30, Nawabshah was declared the hottest place on earth with temperature hitting 50.2 degrees Celsius. It broke its own record of 49.2 Celsius that it had recorded in 2017. Karachi, during the year, had its woes having temperatures in the mid-40s and with utility services playing their notorious game of hide and seek.

Changing weather patterns, thanks to manmade reasons, created havoc across the globe in 2018. The Camp Fire of California burned the town of Paradise to a crisp. Fires in Sweden and even in Siberia confirmed that the world is no more the same. Scientists continued to warn that Earth maybe past the required threshold. But the US, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Russia refused to listen as they blocked efforts at the Poland climate talks.

The ice on top of Sweden's tallest mountain melted to the extent that it lost the title of the tallest moun-



tain. England's long lost (submerged) ancient villages emerged from their graves. In the dead of the dark of the Arctic winter, the world's northernmost weather station experienced temperatures that were not freezing! Japan had its hottest day while Africa too had its own record. To put it all in perspective, scientists have predicted that the abnormal temperatures seen 2018 would soon be the new normal. ■



The wealthiest Communist

IT was an amazing year for e-commerce. First there was Amazon that became, after Apple, the second technology firm to be valued at a trillion dollars. Then there was the Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba that recorded \$30 billion of sales on November 11, also called the Singles' Day, or the Double 11. The Chinese event was originally a novelty student holiday to celebrate being single, in effect countering the Valentine's Day, but has since grown into a month-long online shopping festival that peaks with a 24-hour sales frenzy on November 11.

This year's sale also marked the last 11-11 sales that the company's founder Jack Ma was at the helm of power. He has already announced plans to resign

by September 2019. But the news about Jack Ma was overshadowed by another interesting piece of news later in the year when it was revealed that he was a member of the 89-million-strong Communist Party of China, making him one of its richest Communists ever. The information was published in the *People's Daily* newspaper in China, and contradicted Jack Ma's earlier assertions about his lack of taste of politics.

Having said that, he is neither the first nor likely the last Chinese super-rich capitalist to join the party that counts in its fold billionaires Xu Jiayin and Wang Jianlin. Like most things Chinese, the capitalist-communist hybrid is working wonders for the country! ■

Creating jobs for women in agriculture

A Date with Opportunity

Panjgur, a remote border region of Balochistan in Pakistan, boasts an abundant production of dates but limited processing facilities. Specific cultural dynamics in the region allow women to be more involved in agriculture in the Baloch belts than they are in the Northern Pashtun areas. It is not unusual to see women in the fields harvesting agricultural production but there are strong cultural norms which keep women from accessing off-farm employment opportunities. Baloch Hamza Brothers Dates Co. (BHB) is a date processor in the region which traditionally focused on simple graded and packaged dates. The company wanted to pursue an opportunity for grinded dates but needed to increase the capacity to pit dates, a task at which women excel. This came as a challenge for the company, as cultural norms do not allow both genders to work alongside each other. Few women who worked in the factory had to come in after the male workers left the facility. BHB knew they would have to increase the employment hours of women to effectively increase their production capacity for grinded dates. They would also need to be able to recruit more women, a difficult task in the conservative region. To operate within the cultural norms and access female work force, BHB, with MDF's support, established a women-only facility located close to the residential area. This location was convenient for women who did not need to travel lengthy distances to get to the facility. The company also provided flexible work hours to accommodate women's household responsibilities. Finally, one more change had to be made: "other men in the village would taunt me if my own wife stayed indoors while I asked their female household members to work in a factory", said Muhammad Jan, the owner of BHB. In order to encourage women to take up employment at the facility, Mr. Jan set a precedent by engaging his own wife in the factory in order to lead the way in recruiting female employees. With MDF support, BHB has been successful in introducing new commercial activities both on and off-farm for women in Panjgur. This partnership is part of an MDF portfolio which aims to formalise the local supply chains of businesses and increase local production.



Market Development Facility (MDF) works with businesses, associations and governments in Asia Pacific to help farmers and workers thrive and create sustainable jobs for poor women and men. MDF is funded by the Australian Government and implemented by Palladium.

Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) is central to MDF's work on the ground, and the teams in Fiji, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Pakistan are dedicated to ensuring that the activities benefit women and girls. Their approach integrates WEE to provide information to women in agriculture and create employment opportunities for them under suitable conditions. In Pakistan, MDF works in the dairy, meat, horticulture and leather sectors to create more opportunities for communities. The team also works in the sustainable technology sector to improve access to and usage of water and energy. MDF continues to test the boundaries of what is possible in WEE. MDF also looks at how increasing access to information, markets and job opportunities influence women's decision making in the household and recognition in the society. MDF also explore ways to address issues around nutrition and disability through its portfolio.

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If you're someone who takes their dinner parties very seriously then you need to invest in some good looking dinner sets for every occasion. A pop of red for a fun GT, a glistening rose-gold set for those formal soirées, or a royal blue and teal one for anything in between; this winter is all about falling in love with the finer things in life. Apart from adding personality to a spread, a dinner set makes the host's life much easier because who has the time to match the plate to the platter? So just in time for the post-wedding *dawati*, these dinner sets are all you need to set the perfect table.



We cheated a bit here and included a plate set instead, but the bold Ikat pattern and bright hues can steal anyone's heart – including ours. Add plain white (or red) ceramic bowls to it and you've got yourself a complete set, so fret not and enjoy this one under the Winter Sun.
Product available at Habitt.



Okay, that's not orange we know. This dinner set for six is in the boldest hue of red and makes use of three patterns – all equally pleasing – and can uplift even the dreariest of brunches, lunches, and dinners.
Product available at Habitt.



A geometric design using two complementing shades – bright red and royal blue – this dinner set for six strikes the perfect balance between playful and chic.
Product available at Habitt.



One of our most favourite till date, this dinner set for six yells class, elegance and lavishness. Without being too OTT, it comes embossed with golden trimming, grey floral prints and pastel pink borders.
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FOUR HANDMADE GIFTS for your favourite couple

It is the season of gulaab jamuns, gotaa, and of course wedding gifts. A wedding gift is not just a token to commemorate a special day. It is in fact a meaningful gesture of appreciation that has potential to remain significant and be a source of happiness for years to come. This wedding season make your gift count in more ways than one by presenting any of these four handmade creations.



The Yellow Noor Puff

Apart from having the potential to become great conversation starters – believe us, everyone's going to ask the newlywed couple where they got it from – the Noor Puff makes use of our treasured Rice Stitch, Suzani embroidery, and colourful patterns that celebrate the uniqueness of our culture!
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Handmade Rugs

Hand woven by our artisans, these Bauhaus inspired rugs are the best of both, traditional and modern, world. The contemporary colour palette makes it a perfect fit for any room.
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Hand Painted Crockery

The stunning hand painted crockery inspired by *kashikari* from Multan is a visual treat for urban dwellers. It can make the dinner table look gorgeous, and even play a major role in the newlyweds' kitchen and dining room décor. They can display it proudly on their open shelves and bask in the consequent compliments.
Product available at Habitt.



Handmade trays

Neither mass produced nor mass consumed, these handcrafted trays are made with industrial techniques such as digital print on wood and burning technique.
Product available at Habitt.



4 BEDROOM SETS

that won't break the bank

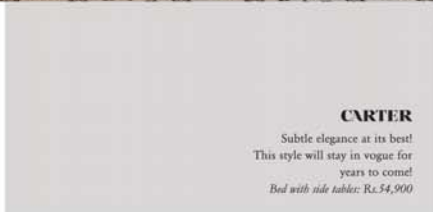
We've got something for everyone, from the minimalist to the maximalist. Inspired by the traditional ornate floors in Marrakech and the modern day plush interiors of upscale European jets, the bridal bedroom sets this season cater to a varied audience. Some come with laser cut wooden headboards while most are tufted with luxe fabrics, such as velvet. Making use of high quality wood, these classic bedroom sets come with a sturdy framework and an equally long lasting design.



1

NOVAK

Perfect for a young and experimental couple who love to keep it simple.
Bed with side tables: Rs.39,000



CARTER

Subtle elegance at its best! This style will stay in vogue for years to come!
Bed with side tables: Rs.54,900

2



3

AUSTIN

Perfect for the new-age couple looking to make a subdued statement!
Bed with side tables: Rs.149,000



EMMERSON

Slightly on the pricier side, the Moroccan-inspired headboard in this one steals the show.
Bed with side tables: Rs.149,000

4





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- ✓ 100 Kangaroo Mother Care Units.
- ✓ 19 Ambulances added to existing fleet of 138.
- ✓ 75 Ultrasound Machines & 5 Color Dopplers added to existing 218 machines.
- ✓ 78 New Mini Labs established bringing current total laboratories to 196.
- ✓ 124 Girls qualified free Midwifery Course & deployed at PPHI HFs with 50 additional Scholarships.
- ✓ Management of EPI in Districts Dadu & Khairpur with Smartphone Routine Immunization System and Computerized Immunization Record of all children.
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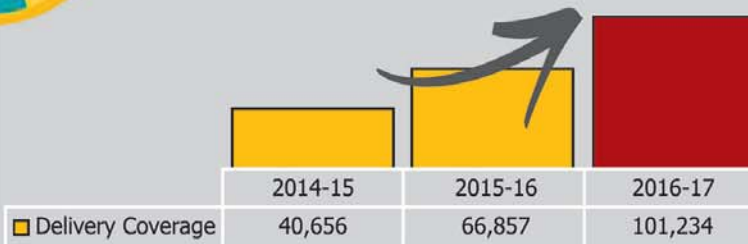
22 million

**Patients Treated
Free of Cost**



101,234

Free Deliveries



45,604

LARC
with record 300% increase**



cover story

IN SEARCH OF A LEGACY



Representing the institutions all through the year were Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Chief Justice Saqib Nisar.

BY ARIFA NOOR

WITH so much having happened during the year – a general election, the conviction of a former prime minister and a party's first time in power – 2018 still belongs to Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar. Amid some of the biggest political news to come out of Pakistan, the man in robes (and his colleagues) managed to hog headlines and attention.

After Iftikhar Chaudhry, the country thought it had seen all that judicial activism had to offer, but that was not the case. Justice Nisar proved that there was much further a 'caring' judiciary could go. Chaudhry showed the way with how Court Room Number One could create news by calling in officials, berating them and how this also went down well with the 'public'. Justice Nisar learnt the lesson well. The officials were soon being called back to the same room for a similar rap on the knuckles. But Justice Nisar wasn't content with this; he wanted to tread his own path and he did – literally.

Justice Nisar created headlines not just in the court rooms, but by visits all over the country. There were visits to hospitals, to filtration plants, to lower court rooms (remember the judge he told off and then flung his phone) and to prisons. And everywhere that the chief justice went, the cameras were sure to follow.

Conservatively dressed in a suit and his trademark dark glasses, the chief justice became a familiar figure on our television screens as he gave us his version of the lone ranger on a mission to fix state and society – previously, only the former chief minister of Punjab had prowled the streets thus. Indeed, this may well be the defining feature of the judicial activism of Justice Nisar; his legacy as the chief justice.

"Each chief justice finds a way to define his legacy," says a senior lawyer. It is what they are looking

JUSTICE NISAR CREATED HEADLINES NOT JUST IN THE COURT ROOMS, BUT BY VISITS ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

for once they end up as the big guy in Court Room Number One. The senior lawyer points out that Justice Tassaduq Jilani, one of the reticent judges in recent times who succeeded Chaudhry, found his 'legacy' in his judgment on the rights of minorities. "He used international forums to draw attention to his judgment."

For many, the search for a legacy has motivated Justice Nisar but with the desire to distinguish himself from Chaudhry. While Chaudhry is remembered for his dismissals and restoration as well as his use of Article 184(3), his suo moto headlines were mostly in the realm of politics; NRO, missing people, LNG, Hajj scandal, Memogate and disqualification of a sitting prime minister. It was a legacy inextricably linked with two political rulers – first Pervez Musharraf and then Asif Ali Zardari.

But in terms of larger administrative issues, Chaudhry's interventions were rather limited. He tried to set sugar price shortly after his second restoration, failed miserably and stayed away from such issues afterwards.

Justice Nisar, however, had no such qualms. Aside from the PMLN-related cases, which were few in number but huge in political impact, the Justice focussed on multiple cases of larger public interest. If in the first week of January he took suo moto notice of the torture of Tayyaba by a lower court judge (human rights cases, in the Pakistani context, have al-

ways been acceptable versions of judicial activism), by the middle of the year, he had decided to set up the Dam Fund, and by the end of the year he had taken to judging school fees.

In between, the quality of drinking water, population planning and health had all become his concerns. It was as if Justice Nisar has suddenly woken up to the crises facing the society and didn't think there was time enough for the other segments of society, or the politicians, to come forward. The judge became a saviour in a way Chaudhry had probably not even dreamt of. And time and again, he stepped onto the Executive foot in a manner that even Chaudhry had not; the abolition of the tax on phone cards being a case in point.

"This is Justice Nisar's reaction or rather answer to Chaudhry," says a lawyer in Islamabad. "Don't forget that Saqib Nisar was in line to become the chief justice of the Lahore High Court but he was robbed of this by Chaudhry. He is now charting his own path in the Supreme Court by taking up the causes of the very people who had supported Chaudhry but were disappointed by him – the middle class is one example."

For this lawyer, Justice Nisar's visits to the hospitals and the issue of school fees were part of an effort to champion those who had been let down by Chaudhry.

But there is by no means a consensus on what motivates Justice Nisar. Is it an effort to distinguish himself from Chaudhry? Is it simply a means to find a legacy as do all chief justices? Or is it something else?

The answer, however, may not lie in the politics of the court alone. With a judiciary such as ours, there is also the larger politics to contend with. As with Chaudhry, Justice Nisar's activism began after the assault from the PML-N during the Panama Papers case.

"In his earlier period, Justice Nisar had acted in line with his reputation as a textual judge; his judgment in the Mustafa Impex case, in which he authored that the federal cabinet, and not the prime minister, was authorised to take decisions was based on a literal and textual reading of the Constitution," says Waqqas Mir, a barrister practising in Lahore. "This is how he was known – as a conservative judge."

But somewhere along the line the conservative judge decided to occasionally leave aside his books and chambers. And his decision to do so coincided with the attack on the Judiciary by the PML-N in the wake of Panama Papers.

It is as if he felt that in case the ruling party resorted to an attack on the Judiciary – be it legal or more – it could perhaps be deflected if the superior judiciary had the weight of the people behind it. This is rather similar to the activist judge in Chaudhry, who, too, emerged after his first restoration in 2007. Prior to that, there was little to his credit except the Steel Mills judgment (and we all know where that had come from). But the attack from the Executive made him turn populist, which also brought him back to Court Room One. Perhaps the fear of a similar fate prompted Justice Nisar to turn populist. Or, as humans rarely are prompted by one factor alone, it could be a combination of the larger politics plus the need for a legacy. There are

also those who believe that the civil-military friction has provided the Judiciary unfettered leeway to move into the jurisdiction of the Executive. Who knows?

That Justice Nisar's activism was different and more aggressive than Chaudhry's can at first glance be attributed to the vociferous media and political resistance at the time of the latter. When Chaudhry's intervention in the sugar prices failed, the coverage from the then lively press, especially the news channels, was unsparing. And for a chief justice who owed so much to the cameras, perhaps Chaudhry paid heed to the message.

Since then, the media has been reined in. Amid pressure in general, concern over media excesses, and an assertive Pemra, criticism of the Judiciary's behaviour and its alleged excesses is rather muted. Just consider what the reaction would have been if Chaudhry had in one stroke abolished a tax. But at a time of a balance-of-payment crisis and a larger economic turmoil, the media discussion of the court's impact on an already shaky economic is barely there.

The media's relative quiet doesn't exist in a vacuum. Justice Nisar also has a more docile political landscape. The PML-N miscalculated the ramifications of its ham-fisted fight with the Judiciary and beyond. Its direct verbal attacks on the Judiciary simply earned it the courts' wrath and little political capital. And in the process, they made few friends. In contrast, the PPP handled the challenge from the Judiciary rather politically, resorting to the bars, empowering them and playing up the dissident voices within. Remember the Supreme Court Bar election that was fought and won by Asma Jehangir. "The PPP put its weight behind Asma in that election," recalls a Lahore-based lawyer.

The bars provided some modicum of a check on Chaudhry, and became a vocal critic. Even the Malik Riaz episode that also involved CJ's son Arsalan was linked to the ruling party. Small incidents in themselves, they all cumulatively restrained the SC. In hindsight, without entering the fray and hence taking more blows than necessary, the PPP managed to politically weaken one of its threats.

The PML-N was too busy lashing out at the courts to even consider other strategies which could have proved less taxing on themselves. And as a result, Justice Nisar faces no resistance whatsoever – one reason he has ended the year by taking on the private schools; a step that has horrified those sections of the middle class which believe that their children's education is far too precious to be tinkered with.

While moving beyond Chaudhry's legacy, Justice Nisar didn't forget to keep employing what had worked for Chaudhry: interference in transfers and postings to create headlines and to keep governments in check. In this regard, Justice Nisar has given the PTI considerable grief too – and forced a federal minister to resign.

And while many feel that without the check of the Judiciary, governments would ride roughshod, overrule the bureaucracy and abuse power without fear, the trend has its fair share of critics. "The SC-mandated water commission has usurped the government's powers to make appointments, transfers and postings," moaned a Karachi-based lawyer. And recently it was reported that the chief minister of Sindh in an interaction with Prime Minister Imran Khan pointed out that Sindh's police was the most independent because since the AD Khawaja judgment, the provincial government has no say in any police appointment.

Such powerlessness – whether or not it is Sindh-specific – raises questions about the role of the Executive and the Judiciary. But there is also a larger process at work which worries the critics.

"The environment in Court Room One for the first couple of hours is dominated by suo moto cases where officials are called in and summarily dismissed and orders are announced. In the second half of the day when routine cases are being heard, the judges find it hard to listen to the nuanced legal arguments that require time. They want to treat lawyers as summarily as they deal with government officials," says a lawyer wearily, who is a supporter-turned-sceptic of Article 184(3).

No wonder then that many look forward to the change due in Court Room One early in 2019. But despite the rumours about the concerns of some judges at the recent streak of activism exercised by Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar, no one can predict that his retirement will put an end to the trend. The year 2019 will address the quandary ... even if slowly. ■

IT WAS MORE OF THE SAME AT NAB

BY TEHMINA QURESHI

DURING his first press conference after being appointed the chief of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in November 2017, a reporter had asked Justice retired Javed Iqbal about the cases lodged against the Sharif family. The justice assured the reporter that there would be across-the-board accountability within the ambit of law. He then deemed it appropriate to add that he was not affiliated with any political party, and would ensure that the law applied equally to all. In answering the question, the justice provided a touchstone against which the performance of NAB through 2018 could be tested while knowing that the ambit of NAB's law extends only to public servants and politicians, and does not apply to judges and personnel of the armed forces.

In the rush of prosecuting certain political quarters during the year, NAB did end up exposing its own ineptitude along the way which was noted and commented upon by the highest office in the land. The NAB chief would have surely intended well when he assumed office and promised even-handed justice, but he did do injustice to his own credibility in May when he 'announced' an inquiry against former prime minister Mian Nawaz Sharif for allegedly having \$4.9 billion kept in India. His 'decision' was based on a column published in a small-time Urdu-language newspaper. The Bureau had to then clarify its position by stating that it was investigating the misleading information published in the said newspaper. The clarification was almost immediate, but the damage had been done. It was taken by many as an indication of which way the wind was blowing.

Even before Imran Khan became the prime minister, his accountability rhetoric had resonated with state institutions. Though the present government and its members may have provided the relevant jargon with their consistent campaigning that has continued even after they were elected to office, the mantle of anti-corruption drive rested through the year on the shoulders of the Supreme Court and NAB, with the FBR and FIA playing supporting roles. And, by and large, the process did have a bipartisan feel about it.

Besides the ongoing cases against the Sharif family, Khawaja brothers, Asif Ali Zardari, Faryal Talpur and others in the opposition, NAB has also been active in keeping an eye on affairs related directly or indirectly to Prime Minister Khan, Defence Minister Perviz Khattak, Punjab Minister for Local Government and Community Development Aleem Khan, Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Zulfi Bukhari, Khyber



NAB chief Javed Iqbal had his ups and downs in 2018.

Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mehmood Khan and others. Federal Minister for Science and Technology Azam Swati and Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan had to resign in order to face the accountability process.

The opposition would love to point out – and it keeps doing that much – that the key in such cases is to talk about how much and to what extent is the due process followed. The cases of Aleem Khan and Prime Minister Khan's sister Aleema Khan have been talked about a lot. In the latter case, fines were imposed but no money trail was asked about by the whole accountability mechanism which the opposition has often called an NRO of sorts.

When it came to NAB, two names more waves during the year than did it chief. One was Shahbaz Sharif who on a personal level got his first taste of accountability as it was the elder Sharif who had taken the hit thus far. And other names was that of Shahzad Saleem, the Director-General of NAB's Lahore operations, whose media interviews and subsequent controversy about the authenticity of his academic qualifications led to calls for internal accountability within NAB itself.

Summing up and looking back, NAB in 2018 continued to be perceived just as it was perceived ever since 'accountability' became the buzz word in Pakistan politics many, many years ago. The burden of proof remained heavier on some shoulders than the rest. ■

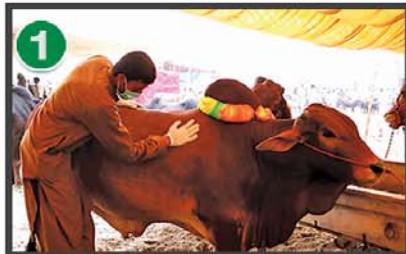
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- 3 Keep children and yourself away from animal blood.



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- ✓ Bleeding from patients mouth, nose or any other part of the body

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Health Department, Government of Sindh

national

THE CHANGING CHANGE



Imran Khan spoke and spoke and spoke through the year; first as an opposition leader and then as the prime minister. To walk the talk is likely to be part of his plan for 2019.

BY ASHA'AR REHMAN

THE year 2018 lived up to its billing of being the year of change. In August, Imran Khan was sworn in as the prime minister. The Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI) won the right to set up a government in Islamabad and it retained power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). For a province that has been sending governments packing every election, a party winning twice in succession was a feat worthy in itself.

The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) – seeking to modify itself in its own unknown if not mysterious ways – managed to do well in interior Sindh. However, there was a drastic change in the old rural-urban equation in the province. As its counter in the urban and increasingly uneasy Karachi, the PPP now had to contend with a bunch of PTI lawmakers emboldened and strengthened by the fact that their party was in power in Islamabad. This was something new.

Balochistan by and large appeared to retain its old aura where the influential people enjoying the right patronage were kept going. Having said that, some new players were introduced in the mix and some well-known parties reined in, in favour of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and other more useful

THE PTI VICTORY HAD SOME REMARKABLE FEATURES INDICATING THAT CHANGE ALSO DICTATED MANY COMPROMISES.

current choices.

The biggest bang of the election of course came in Punjab. Many districts in the province stood fast by the Sharifs but on the whole Punjab gave in to the Khan campaign. The clouds of uncertainty hanging over the Sharifs and their lieutenants who now faced persecution in courts did help to tilt the balance in PTI's favour.

The election victory for Khan capped a proud '22-year-long' struggle that had begun with the launch of the PTI in a not-so-fancy Lahore hotel in 1996. The installation of the first PTI government as a result of the general election held in July was hailed by many as just the start of the reform train which was to bring in wholesale changes in Pakistan. But this didn't stop the Khan backers from breaking in celebrations to mark a big electoral victory

against the might of those who had been clinging to power for many decades.

The PTI victory had some remarkable features indicating that change also dictated many compromises. One, the win came about after the party had gone on a grand hunt for the 'electable' wherever it could find them. Two, as it turned out, quite many of the talented souls thus delivered to the Khan doorstep happened to belong to the pool Gen Pervez Musharraf had established to serve his interests after his coup against Mian Nawaz Sharif in 1999. The same ambitious lot that had undergone some basic training in power politics was now so prominently available to do Mr Khan's bidding, the main slogan still staying the same as it was back then: Cleansing the system and taking the corrupt to task.

There was definitely a 'Q-ian' quality to the new setup in power. Apart from the known names that had been a part of the Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) governments under Gen Musharraf, many of those brought to the helm in the provincial government had first expressed an interest in vying for a role in government via politics in the same (Musharrafian) era.

This was most starkly true for Punjab where a virtual unknown soul from Dera Ghazi Khan was installed as the chief minister who took more than a

hundred days to hold his debut presser. Usman Buzdar was hailed by the PTI as the 'new Wasim Akram in the Kaptaan's side'. To more probing minds he was there as the Punjab chief minister to counter any pressing calls for a new province in southern Punjab – something that the PTI had promised in its election manifesto.

By and large there was a sense of a turnaround in Lahore that had been the impregnable bastion of the Sharif family for the last many decades. The new government took some initiatives to signal tough times ahead for its opponents, mainly the PML-N in the context of proceedings in Lahore and the whole of Punjab.

There was a lot of tension in the ranks of the bureaucracy also, amid whispers that many of the senior government employees were reluctant to work with the PTI. The Khan camp on its part put down this hesitancy among the senior bureaucrats to the long period during which the government officers had been made to serve the Sharifs and their interests.

The PTI in the opposition had whipped up emotion in a manner that had created quite a lot of energy in the ranks of government servants, among others. That the party could become a victim of the same sentiment once it took power was pretty much a possibility. There were incidents soon after the election which suggested how careful the Khan government now needed to be to prevent the unease in various sections of society – including the bureaucracy – from reaching a point of frenzy.

Soon after the election, the refusal by a senior police officer in Pakpattan to bow to external pressure by the influential people set the alarms bell ringing, signifying just how serious the grievances of those working the system were, let alone the plight of the outsider that the system routinely victimised. The reading was corroborated without much delay when officials in a couple of districts in Punjab resisted the newly-elected lawmakers who insisted on having people of their choice working in important administrative posts.

Similar rumours that the 'afsar shahi', or the bureaucracy, was not cooperating with the PTI ministers emanated from Islamabad. However, like the disturbing murmuring campaign of disapproval run against Mr Khan elsewhere in the country, these whispers, too, died down with time. It emerged that the PTI had total support from the institutions – perhaps the kind of support that the governments over the last many decades were lacking. This in mind, the focus naturally shifted from the usual concerns about whether a party could survive in government to what kind of an impact the PTI, more specifically its leader with the clear backing of all-important institutions, was capable of leaving overall on the country.

The election of July 25, 2018, had landed the PTI support from the unlikeliest of places – in the sense that the parties in power before the PTI did not enjoy such expansive presence. For instance, the 14 seats that the PTI won in Karachi in the latest general election was a huge, potentially path-defining shift in itself, even though in its current safe value it fell well short of bringing a long-desired anti-PPP transformation in Sindh.

A majority of Karachi MNAs belonging to an all-Pakistan outfit in power at the federal level, together with the power in Punjab and KP, and a friendly setup in Balochistan, definitely gave the new setup the wholesome look that all parties in power in the country have craved but few, if any, were blessed with. This has left Prime Minister Khan with that much less room for not faltering compared to the purported saviours who came to the nation's rescue before him. ■

IS PAKISTAN-INDIA ICE SILENTLY BREAKING?

BY JAWED NAQVI

IN May, in most parts of Pakistan and India the ice usually melts rapidly with the punishing heat, but next year it could break instead between the two countries. Prime Minister Imran Khan must have a good reason for believing so when he expressed the hope to The Washington Post recently that talks between the sullen neighbours could resume after the Indian elections in May 2019. On the one hand the contest would be a referendum on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

controversy-laden tenure, and on the other the keen fight between the rightwing ultra-nationalist establishment and a Congress-led opposition could harbour clues to the future tweaking of New Delhi's difficult relations with its South Asian neighbours, beginning with Pakistan. The announcement of a billion-plus-dollar Indian support to the Maldives late in the year is being seen as a diplomatic manoeuvre to keep China from gaining more influence in South Asia than it already has.

By most accounts, Mr Modi may have missed a big chance to change the discourse with Pakistan in 2018, which would have been to his benefit, even perhaps electorally, and to the region as a whole. But the opportunity to improve bilateral ties, which in turn would usher a better era of regional engagement is bound to come with or without Modi sooner than later.

Pakistan's recent declaration that India's involvement was needed to resolve the Afghan question comes as a new paradigm to ponder for all concerned, particularly those that have a bigger stake in a peaceful resolution of the blood-drenched conflict. Consider also that President Trump would not want canvass support for a second term in 2020 with the baggage of American casualties and a virtual defeat at the hands of the Taliban staring him in the face. That is clearly a factor in the fresh assessment he has made with regard to Pakistan's current and future role in ending the Afghan conflict. Russia, China and Iran are also weighing in with that objective. India would not wish to be left out from the high table of global diplomacy already underway.

PM Khan is also understood to have hinted that a resolution to the Kashmir imbroglio may not be a distant dream, and speculation is rife about reviving the Dr Manmohan Singh-General Musharraf 'formula' to end the tragic stalemate in the valley. This would inherently come with the added advantage to India of an open-arm welcome to join the economic corridor initiated by China to open up the region to myriad benefits, all packed with affirmation of a shared interest. The business elite in India would want to agree to a favourable deal in this regard with China and Pakistan.

There is an untenable narrative that a military standoff with Pakistan helps the person in the saddle in Delhi to swing the votes. If that were so, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's vote count would not have fallen but risen in the wake



Taking their equation to a new era of regional diplomacy. Not everyone was impressed though.

of the Kargil outing. Similarly, Singh's refusal to move the military against Pakistan over the November 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai should have cost him his job. Instead, he won a second term with his phlegmatic appeal that led to Sharm el Sheikh.

Prime Minister Khan has made several overtures in tandem with the military to improve ties with India, and the alacrity with which he moved on the Kartarpur corridor to ease visa-less travel for Sikh pilgrims appears to have taken Delhi by surprise. The corridor is critical now for both sides as Sikhism's first Guru is believed to have lived for the last 18 years of his life at the site where the Kartarpur gurdwara was built. A needless and potentially self-defeating controversy was set off by Delhi when Navjot Sidhu, a former cricketer and a Sikh politician and a friend of Imran Khan, struck up a spontaneous accord on a visit to Pakistan with the army chief.

But perhaps the most important gesture that came from the Pakistan leader in his efforts to mend ties with India has been his reference to the Mumbai nightmare of November 2008 as an act of terrorism, which he said needs to be fully investigated in Pakistan for the country's own good. India on its part has repeated its calls for the prosecution of people it says were masterminds and facilitators of the attacks in Mumbai. It blames the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) for the carnage, and says Pakistan had shown "little sincerity in bringing the perpetrators to justice".

In his interview with the Post, Mr Khan said: "We also want something done about the bombers of Mumbai. I have asked our government to find out the status of the case. Resolving that case is in our interest because it was an act of terrorism." But he is equally aware of the fraught circumstances he is dealing with.

Mr Khan, who spoke about Pakistan taking two steps for peace for every step taken by India in his first speech after his party won the general election, referred to the reasons why he believes his peace overtures had been rejected by New Delhi. "I know, because India has elections coming up. The ruling party has an anti-Muslim, anti-Pakistan approach. They rebuffed all my overtures," he said. "I have opened a visa-free peace corridor with India called Kartarpur. Let's hope that after the election is over, we can again resume talks with India." Let's all of us hope too. ■

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Citizens are requested to inform the authorities
of those violating the law, at:

15
or the nearest Police Station

Name of the person providing information will be kept confidential.



economy

YEAR OF THE FOG

BY KHURRAM HUSAIN

A THICK fog of uncertainty descended upon the economy at the beginning of 2018 that had not lifted till the end of the year. The uncertainty was driven by two things: the Dar growth years began to unravel as the rupee came unhinged by December 2017 and interest rates began to rise from January onwards; and the approach of the election brought questions over policy continuity.

For three years the economy had showed some signs of revival, between 2014 and 2017. Ishaq Dar never felt tired of pointing out the growth in the real sector, from construction to manufacturing, and vast new infrastructure schemes from roads and highways to power plants and ports. But one critical weakness emerged with ever greater urgency as the growth powered on and the public works neared completion: imports surged from \$41 billion to beyond \$56bn in this time while exports actually fell from \$25bn in FY2014 to \$22bn by FY2017, before clawing back some of that lost ground in FY2018 when they came in at \$24bn, still below the level they were at when the growth rates began.

The growing trade deficit lay at the heart of the economy's troubles. By the end of fiscal 2018, when the PML-N government handed over power to an interim government in preparation for the general election, the trade deficit came in at just below \$37bn, when it had stood at just below \$20bn by end of FY2014 when the growth rate began to rise. The government claimed this was due to large imports of capital goods, mainly machinery, for installation in the China-funded power projects, and, once operational, this machinery would help kick-start the economy and put it on a sustainable growth path.

The argument had some truth to it since machinery imports declined from the summer of 2018 onwards, once the projects under construction approached the start of commercial operations. But first-quarter trade data, covering the July-September period, showed the trade deficit at \$8.75bn, whereas the same quarter in the previous year had it as \$8.59bn. The growth had slowed down, but the elevated level of the deficit persisted, and as the year ended it was likely that the second quarter will show the same trend.

In Dar's years the economy powered on while the foreign currency reserves that were carefully built up using a combination of borrowing and bilateral assistance, first reached their peak in October 2016, and then began a steep decline that continued unabated through 2018. All through the year, the government and the central bank struggled to arrest this decline through successive rounds of rupee depreciation, interest rate hike, regulatory duties on imports, incentives for exporters. But all the efforts proved insufficient. The fiscal year ended in June 2018, precisely when an interim government was in place, and saw record high current account deficit of \$18bn.

By the end of 2018, foreign currency reserves had fallen to a level where they were barely enough to



A handshake with the IMF continued to be just round the corner for the better part of the last quarter of 2018, but it never got going in real terms.

INVESTORS WANT TO SEE HOW LONG THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE TO REALISE THAT A SHARP ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT IS THE ONLY OPTION.

finance two months of imports when the adequate level is internationally considered to be three months. Two credit ratings agencies – Moody's and Fitch – raised the alarm in December that Pakistan's debt levels were rising while reserves were falling, saying such a situation could take the country towards serious problems in servicing its current level of external debt. Fitch accompanied its announcement with a downgrade of Pakistan credit rating into junk territory.

The uncertainty created by the trade deficit and the attendant outflow of foreign currency was compounded by the uncertainty emanating from an approaching election and speculation about the outcome. If power was about to be handed over to a new government under the PTI – and in the run up to the election it was not clear who the victor might be – investors were worried about what sort of policies the new government would follow, how long it would take to realise the gravity of the economic situation it was faced with, and how far it will honour the policy commitments made by the previous government.

Under this fog of uncertainty, all investment

decisions came to a standstill as the curtain fell on the PML-N government after their budget announcement in April 2018. Through the interim government, and past the swearing in of the new PTI government, investors waited in the wings to see how the new team is going to behave towards the economy before making any move.

Investors wanted to see how long the new government will take to realise that a sharp economic adjustment, which is painful and politically costly, is the only option. The leadership of the PTI was talking about recovering looted wealth stashed abroad, and reaching out to the Pakistani Diaspora as its main ideas about dealing with the large and growing foreign exchange crunch that was driving the economy towards a potential crisis.

This was highly unrealistic talk in the view of foreign investors, and the sooner the new government swivelled towards genuine policy steps – new revenues, expenditure cuts and currency depreciation – the more the markets would acknowledge that the government has a sound handle on the economy.

By September the realisation had begun to set in. A 'mini budget' totalling Rs800bn worth of a fiscal adjustment was announced, and by October the government had formally approached the IMF for a bailout. By the end of 2018, it appears that those talks will be wrapped up, and 2019 will open with Pakistan preparing to enter its 13th IMF programme.

The year will be remembered as the year Dar's growth rates unravelled, and the economy drifted through the thickest fog of uncertainty it had seen in almost five years, only to emerge on familiar shores at the other end: the doorstep of the IMF and a sharp economic adjustment to bring its economic fundamentals in line with reality. ■



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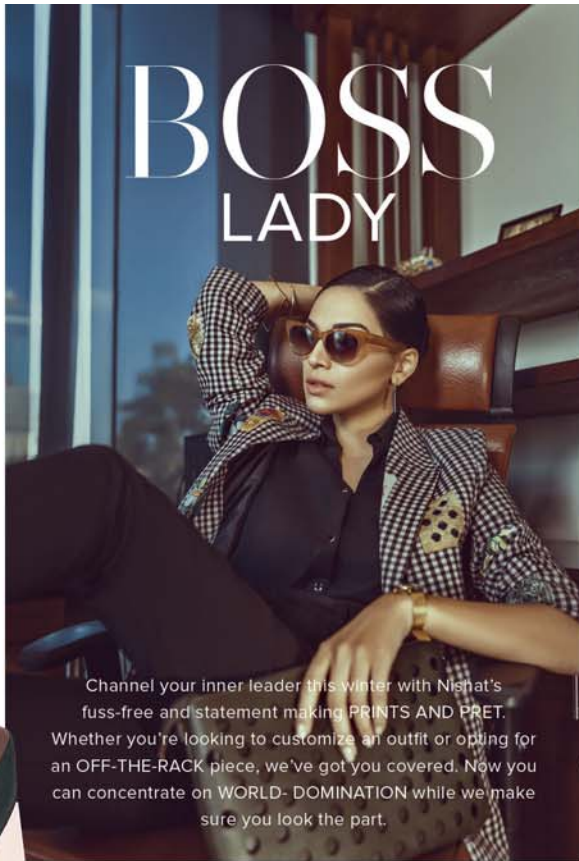
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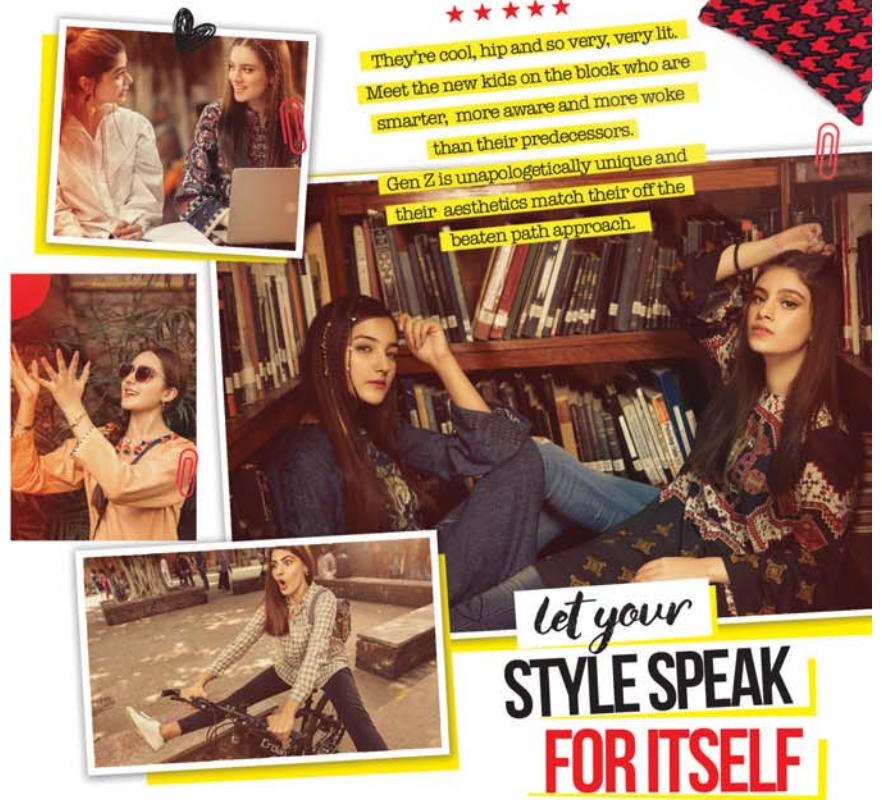
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The Edit



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THE NATION IN 2018

JANUARY



- 01 Election Commission unveils Result Management System to improve electoral transparency.
- 02 Pakistan, India exchange lists of prisoners.
- 03 No-trust motion filed against Balochistan CM.
- 04 Pakistan needs to earn the money it gets: US
- 05 US suspends military aid to Pakistan.
- 08 Foreign Minister says US no more an ally.
- 10 Balochistan CM resigns ahead of no-trust vote.
- ** Trouble in Kasur after body found of Zainab, 8.
- 13 SC dissolves PMDC body.
- 14 Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo takes oath as Balochistan CM.
- 16 IHC restores FIR against ex-CIA station head.
- ** Strangled body of four-year-old Asma found in Mardan.
- 17 Ulama unanimously declare violence against state un-Islamic.
- ** Medico-legal report of 4-year-old Asma points to sexual violence.



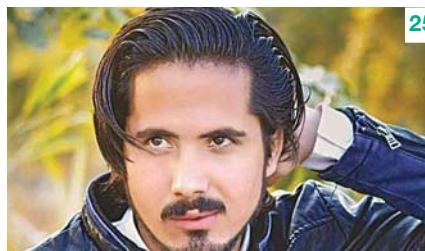
- 18 Opposition holds rally in Lahore; fails to present charter of demands.
- 20 Pakistan seeks US aid for return of Afghan refugees.
- 21 Six die in Indian firing from across LoC.
- 23 Punjab University clash leaves 12 hurt.
- 24 Suspect in Zainab case held.
- ** SSP Rao Anwar caught fleeing in the wake of Nageebullah murder case.
- 25 Azam Saigol passes away.
- 26 Pakistan, US in spat over drone attack target.
- 27 SBP raises interest rate to 6pc.
- 29 Lyari Expressway inaugurated after 13-year delay.
- ** Medical student Asma Rani shot dead in Kohat for refusing marriage proposal.
- 30 Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi announces Equalisation Package for Balochistan.
- 31 Attempts fail to arrest fugitive SSP Rao Anwar.

FEBRUARY

- 01 Two-month extension granted to Afghan refugees.
- 02 Nehal Hashmi jailed over contempt of court.
- ** Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani, wife found dead in Karachi.
- 04 First suicide attack in Swat in five years leaves 11 dead.
- 05 PTI, PML-Q join hands for Senate polls.
- ** 32 Pakistanis die in migrant boat tragedy off Libya.
- 06 Row hits MQM-P over Senate nominations.
- 08 Prime accused in Mashal Khan case sentenced to death.
- 09 Rift within MQM widens as Senate polls near.



- 10 IHC asks NAB to proceed against Pervez Musharraf over corruption.
- 11 Pak-Afghan talks fail to make headway.
- 12 Asma Jahangir passes away
- 13 PML-N wins crucial Lodhran by-election.
- ** Anti-terror law amended to ban UN-listed entities.
- 14 In response to his letter, SC tells SSP Rao Anwar to surrender himself.
- 15 Punjab govt starts taking over JuD assets.
- 16 Army says it is deploying troops in Saudi Arabia.
- 17 Govt under pressure in parliament over troop deployment in Saudi Arabia.
- 18 Culprit in Zainab case sentenced to death.
- 19 PTI confirms Imran Khan's third marriage.
- 21 Govt claims reprieve on terrorist-financing watchlist.
- 22 SC annuls Elections Act 2017; bars Nawaz Sharif from heading PML-N.
- 23 PSL-2018 gets underway in Dubai.
- 24 TAPI gas pipeline project inaugurated.
- 25 Youth behind pro-Nageebullah Mehsud sit-in killed in D.I. Khan.



- 27 Three ex-generals on ECL in Railways land scam.
- ** Islamabad High Court declares suspension of mobile phone service illegal.
- 28 Nawaz Sharif named PML-N Quaid for life.

MARCH



- 01 Nehal Hashmi slams judiciary on release from prison in a contempt-of-court case.
- 02 Circular debt soars to Rs922bn.
- 04 PML-N gains Senate control; eyes top post.
- 05 Widespread horse-trading accusations surround Senate poll results.
- 07 Cabinet approves privatisation of PIA, PSM.
- 08 Pakistan, India exchange proposals for prisoner swap.
- ** Over 200 govt officers found holding dual nationality.
- 09 Court asks govt to take step for the arrest and extradition of Gen Pervez Musharraf.
- 10 IHC verdict makes it mandatory to declare one's faith while applying for any govt job.
- ** Amid controversy, Sindh govt takes control of all public-sector universities.
- 11 Interpol hands over to FIA custody of suspect in medical student Asma murder case.
- 12 Shoe thrown at Nawaz Sharif in a seminary near Lahore.



- 13 In an upset vote, Sadiq Sanjrani becomes first Senate chairman from Balochistan; Ruling PML-N stands embarrassed.
- 16 Envoy called from India amid harassment of diplomats and families.
- 17 Special Court orders suspension of Gen Musharraf's CNIC.
- 18 Kabul invites PM Abbasi for talks to mend bilateral ties.
- 20 Absconding accused in Mashal murder case surrenders himself to Mardan police.
- ** Amir Liaquat joins PTI.
- 22 Fugitive SSP Rao Anwar arrested from SC premises.
- 23 Sherry Rehman, of PPP, becomes first woman to head Opposition in Senate.
- 26 US bans seven more Pak firms for 'nuclear trade'.
- 27 ECP removes Farooq Sattar as MQM-P convener.
- 28 Nawaz Sharif regrets having moved SC over Memogate.
- ** Nine Pakistanis named in Forbes 30-Under-30 Asia list.
- 29 Army clarifies so-called Bajwa Doctrine after widespread media speculation.
- 30 Dissidents of PML factions launch BAP.
- 31 Nacta chief acknowledges IS as a 'real threat'.

APRIL

- 01 Malala visits hometown Swat.
- 02 Karachi holds T20 against West Indies; the city's first bilateral contest in nine years.
- 03 Four of a Christian family killed in Quetta.
- 04 TLP chief Khadim Rizvi declared proclaimed offender in Faizabad sit-in case.
- ** Updated UN list of terrorists names 139 Pakistanis.
- 05 Pakistan approaches WB after India builds dam on Neelum.
- 06 PM Abbasi announces radical tax amnesty scheme.



- ** Weightlifter Talha Talib bags medal at Commonwealth Games.
- 09 Economic Reforms Package activated through four presidential ordinances.
- 10 Govt says economy growing at 5.8pc; highest rate in 11 years.
- 11 Army hands over security affairs to civil administration in Dir after a decade.
- 14 SC says disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) is for life; Nawaz, Maryam stand defiant.
- 15 Wrestler Inam Butt wins lone Gold Medal for Pakistan at the Commonwealth Games.
- 17 PM, COAS meet Saudi king in Riyadh.



- 25 Sindh, KP, Balochistan CMs walk out of NEC meeting over development plan.
- ** Quetta suicide blast kills 6 policemen.
- 26 Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) hold talks with govt-backed jirga.
- 27 IHC disqualifies Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif for life.
- 28 Rumpus in NA as an 'unelected' minister presents budget well beyond its electoral term.
- 29 After \$1bn Chinese loan, govt rules out going to IMF for a bailout package.
- ** Hazaras in Quetta continue to be targeted; two killed.
- 30 US diplomat involved in Islamabad road accident; motorcyclist injured.

MAY



- 01 PM, COAS visit Fata, talk of mainstreaming the region.
- 02 Islamabad finally gets a proper airport; the country's largest.
- 04 Talks between Army and PTM hit snags.
- 05 SC stays all activities in Karachi's Bahria Town, declaring the basic land deal illegal.
- 07 Ahsan Iqbal survives assassination bid in Narowal.
- ** Judicial body has asked courts not to issue stay orders on CPEC-related projects.
- 09 SC suspends Ishaq Dar's Senate election notification.
- ** Govt given one week to decide the fate of Asghar Khan case.
- 10 PTI makes inroads into southern Punjab as Junoobi Punjab Suba Mahaz joins hands. Some confusion prevails whether it's a merger or an alliance.
- ** PM Abbasi slams NAB over charge that Nawaz Sharif had sent \$4.9bn to India.
- 12 In a wide-ranging Dawn interview, Nawaz raises the issue of Mumbai attack trials in Pakistan.
- 20 Pakistan protests as India inaugurates controversial Kishanganga dam.



- ** Sabika Sheikh of Karachi identified among eight students killed during shooting spree on a US campus.
- 21 Heatwave hits major parts of the country; Karachi sizzles at 44 degrees.
- 22 Former chiefs of ISI and RAW make waves by co-authoring The Spy Chronicles.
- 24 Water talks fail with World Bank and India.
- 25 Karachi Archbishop Joseph Coutts appointed Cardinal by Pope Francis.
- 26 GHQ summons ex-ISI chief over tell-all book; Nawaz wants NSC meeting on the issue.
- 29 Ex-CJP Nasirul Mulk named caretaker PM.
- 30 Pakistan, India agree on restoring LoC ceasefire.
- 31 PTI goes back on its word regarding caretaker Punjab CM.
- ** Balochistan PA adopts poll-delay resolution.
- ** At 46 degrees, Karachi has its hottest day of the year.

JUNE

- 01 Order issued to suspend Musharraf's CNIC, passport.
- ** NA completes its five-year term; the third in a row to do so.
- 02 SC overturns IHC decision, allows Khawaja Asif to contest polls.
- 03 Reham Khan's autobiography makes intense waves even before its launch.
- 04 SC overturns LHC verdict on nomination forms; on-time polls the top priority.
- 05 ISPR reiterates dialogue offer to India.
- 07 Jemima warns Reham of libel action if the latter's book gets published.



- 09 PTI faces internal dissent in the wake of poll ticket allotment.
- 10 SC to stay away from Kalabagh dam controversy: CJP.
- 11 SC gives accountability court 30 days to arrive at a verdict in cases against Nawaz, Maryam.
- 12 Nawaz lawyer quits saying he is unable to match the pace dictated by SC.
- ** Rupee nosedives against the dollar.
- ** Chaudhry Nisar quits PML-N.



- 13 Imran makes waves with his chartered flight to Umra that also had onboard a friend on ECL.
- 14 Major police, bureaucracy shakeup in all provinces ahead of polls.
- ** CJP dares Musharraf to return and appear in court.
- 15 Eid moon-sighting row again hits the country.
- 19 Imran firm in the face of sit-in by PTI workers against poll tickets.
- 20 Nawaz lawyer rejoins legal proceedings.
- 21 Moody's slashes Pakistan's rating to negative.
- 23 Imran Justifies choice of 'electables'.
- 24 Pak prisoner returns from Indian after 11 years.
- 25 CJP says he will soon ask the nation "to offer a sacrifice for a cause".
- 28 Pakistan put on FATF grey list.
- 29 PML-N's Daniyal Aziz convicted of contempt of court; disqualified from polls.

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6- QR Code



3- Guilloche Pattern

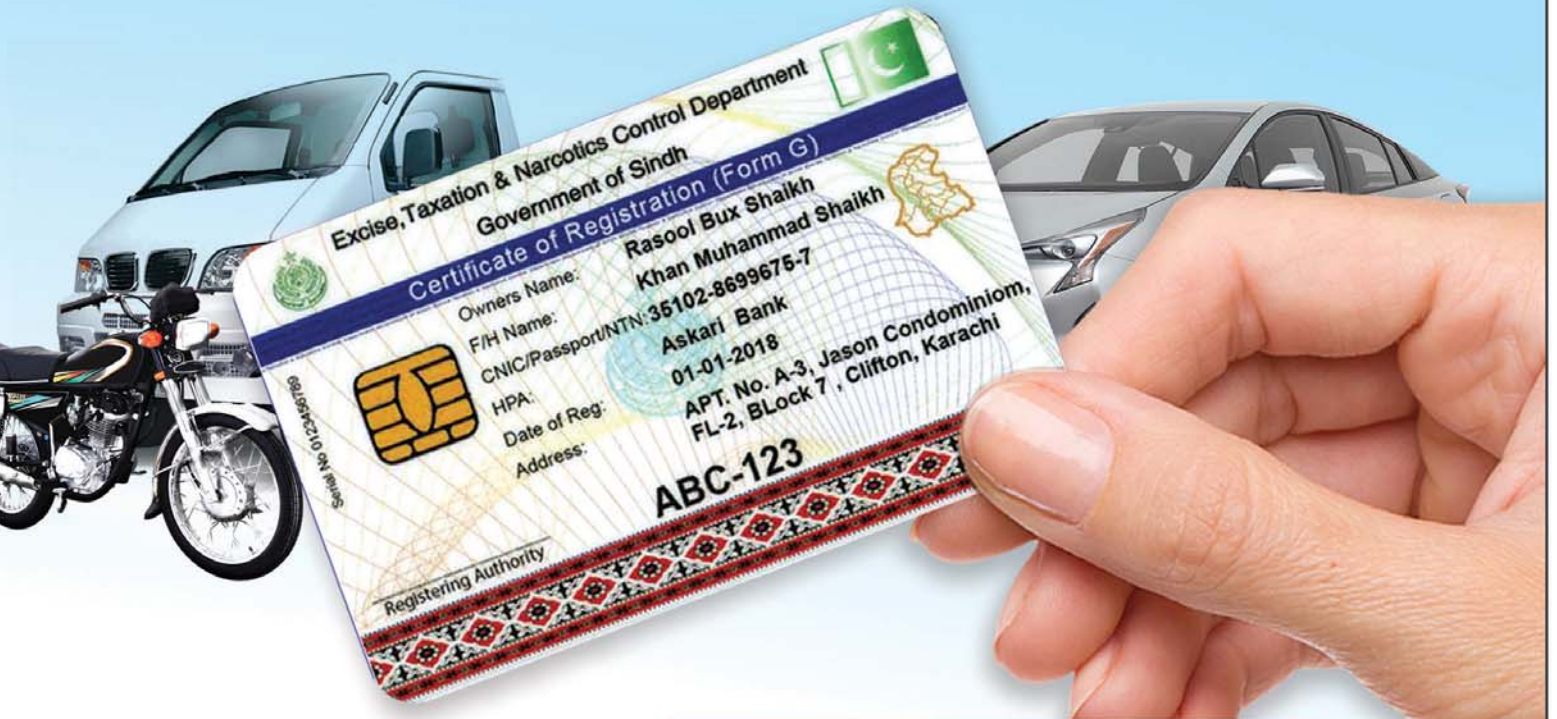


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Government of Sindh

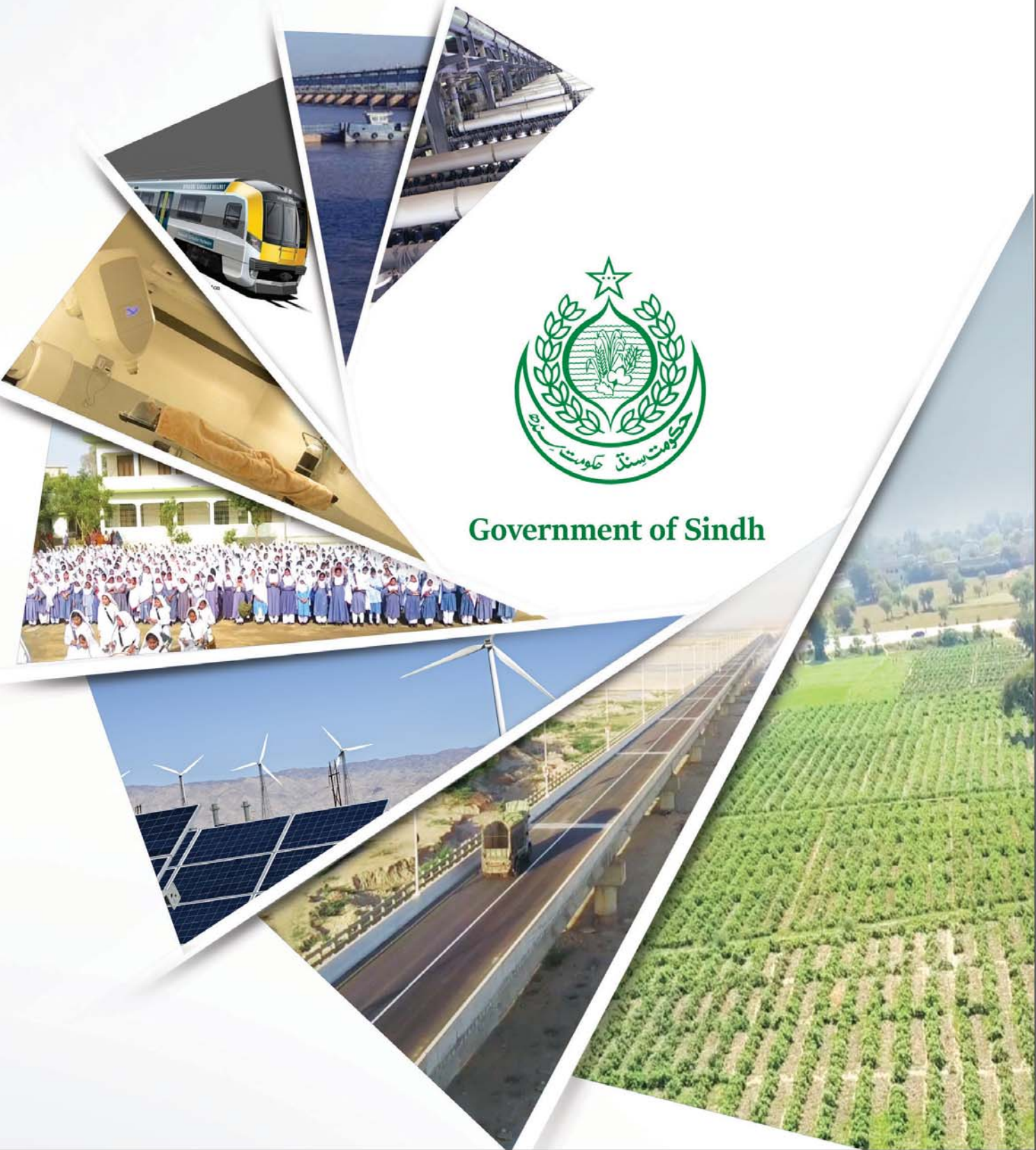
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JULY



- 02** Bilawal motorcade in Lyari pelted with stones as ECP reminds govt of threat to poll candidates.
- 05** CJP donates Rs1m, seeks immediate construction of two dams.
- 07** Nawaz, Maryam convicted in Avenfield case; Imran happy.
- **** Close Zardari aide Hussain Lawai picked up by FIA in money-laundering case.
- 08** In a first, Tarbela dam hits dead level in peak inflow season.
- 11** Nawaz insists, Army denies role in polls.
- 12** After dam construction initiative, CJP talks about launching a debt-retirement plan.
- 14** Nazwaz, Maryam, return; taken to Adiala prison.
- **** Attack on Mastung rally leaves over 125 dead, including candidate Siraj Raisani.



- 18** Hearing of appeals by the imprisoned Sharifs put off till after the elections.
- 19** Glacier melt creates artificial lake in Gilgit.
- 22** PML-N's Hanif Abbasi jailed for life in ephedrine case.
- 23** IHC judge's remarks about judicial conduct disturb CJP after ISPR tweet.
- 24** Justice Tahira Safdar named to head BHC.
- 25** On the eve of general elections, Nawaz has health issues in Adiala jail.
- 26** As major parties cry foul and 31 die on the day in Quetta blast, PTI rises from the general elections as the lone winner.
- 27** Imran spells out 'govt agenda' as others continue to question poll validity.
- **** ECP blames technology for unprecedented delay in poll results.
- 28** While PPP stays away and PML-N keeps doors open, smaller parties plan 'boycott of oath' by the newly-elected legislature.
- 30** PML-N, PPP join hands to give PTI tough time in parliament.
- 31** In a first, Supreme Judicial Council begins open trial of a sitting high court judge.
- **** ECP orders recount in over 70 constituencies.

AUGUST

- 01** After two days in hospital, Nawaz goes back to Adiala.
- 02** Imran invites Indian stars to oath-taking ceremony.
- 03** Imran opts for austerity; no foreign dignitaries, celebrities at oath-taking ceremony.
- 04** ECP orders inquiry into RTS failure in the wake of rigging charges.
- 05** PTI signs coalition deal with bitter rival MQM-P.
- 07** Imran, Shahbaz named by their parties to contest the PM election.
- 08** After about a dozen days, ECP announces poll results while holding back verdict on 26 seats.
- 09** Opposition parties hold protest; continue to blow hot and cold with poll rigging allegations.
- 11** ECP cancels Shangla polls over low women turnout.



- 12** Five die in terrorist attack on Gilgit checkpoint.
- 13** Over 85pc NA candidates lose security deposit for failing to meet minimum vote requirement.
- 14** New NA takes oath and so do PAs in Sindh, KP and Balochistan.
- 15** PM-in-waiting Imran supports Turkey in its tiff with US.
- 16** PTI clinches Speaker, Deputy Speaker slots in NA.
- 17** Opposition alliance in tatters as PPP refuses to stand behind PML-N's Shahbaz in PM poll.
- 18** Imran Khan elected Leader of the House by NA.
- **** Massive and prolonged power outage hits Sindh, Balochistan.
- 19** Imran sworn in as PM; picks Cabinet.



- 21** In its first meeting federal cabinet puts names of imprisoned Nawaz, Maryam on ECL.
- 25** Contents of PM's diplomatic talk with US trigger public spat.
- 27** A day after nominating Dr Ameer Jogeza as Balochistan Governor, govt says it was just "a recommendation".
- 29** Helicopter storm hits PTI govt's austerity-laden reforms pledge.
- 31** Prime Minister Imran Khan visits GHQ and receives extensive briefing by army top brass.

SEPTEMBER

- 01** Pakistan backs Iran over its N-deal row with US.
- 02** To be led by PM, govt forms Economic Advisory Council (EAC).
- 03** Govt confirms US has blocked CSF reimbursements.
- 04** SC told Pakistanis own \$150bn in UAE property market.
- 05** PTI's Arif Alvi elected country's 13th President.



- 06** In talks between PM and visiting Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Pakistan and US agree to start afresh.
- **** Task force formed to get ill-gotten money from abroad.
- 07** Civil-military divide a myth, says PM Khan.
- 08** PM urges overseas Pakistanis to donate a minimum of \$1000 for dam construction.
- 09** Two EAC members quit over removal of a controversial name by govt.
- 10** Pakistan, China agree to broaden CPEC base with 'third country' investors.
- 11** Army donates over Rs1bn for dam construction.
- 12** Nawaz, Maryam on parole as Kulsoom dies in London.



- 16** CJP threatens dam opponents with treason charge.
- 17** In Karachi, PM says Afghans and Bengalis born in Pakistan would be given NICs and passports.
- 18** PM leaves for Saudi Arabia; Sharifs back in Adiala after parole ends.
- 19** Imran denies having taken a decision on citizenship for refugees.
- 20** Sharifs granted bail by IHC.
- **** PM meets Saudi king in Riyadh; Army chief calls on Chinese President in Beijing.
- 21** Saudi Arabia likely to become CPEC partner: govt.
- 23** Within 24 hours of announcing a meeting between foreign ministers, India cancels the meeting; Pakistan calls the decision "ill-considered"; PM Khan tweets his disappointment.
- 27** Son-in-law of ex-CJP Chaudhry arrested in Dubai over alleged part in housing scam.
- 28** SC maintains disqualification of Jahangir Tareen.
- 29** Chief Justice Saqib Nisar blames the NAB authorities for corruption accused getting favourable decision from judicial courts.

OCTOBER



- 06 Shahbaz arrested by NAB in housing scam.
- 07 CNG prices for the first time soar past Rs100 mark.
- 08 PM says IMF help needed to ride over critical phase.
- 09 SC accepts apology from Punjab CM; drops proceedings in DPO transfer case.
- 10 In the largest single-day drop in a decade, rupee falls by 7.5pc.
- 11 PM tells nation not to worry as the economic crisis was only short-term in nature.
- 12 Justice Shaukat Siddiqui sacked for accusing ISI of interference. Justice talks of going public with his stance.



- ** Pakistan officially seeks IMF loan.
- 15 PML-N registers major progress in by-elections at the cost of the ruling PTI.
- 18 On transit remand, Shahbaz appears in NA, makes passionate speech against "political victimisation".
- 19 SC orders NAB to conduct forensic audit of Thar coal project.
- 20 Visiting team not impressed by compliance with anti-money laundering steps.
- 23 After a decade, Swat handed back to civil administration.
- 24 S. Arabia pledges \$6bn package to Pakistan.
- ** Sana Mir becomes first Pakistani to be ranked No. 1 on the ICC list of women ODI bowlers.
- 25 PM vows to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.
- 26 Pakistan looking for an 'integrated deal' with China: Asad
- 28 Govt denies any landing by Israeli plane anywhere in the country; uproar continues.
- 30 SC stays transfer of Islamabad IG done on "the verbal orders of Prime Minister Imran Khan".
- 31 PML-N decides to attend multiparty moot without any of the Sharifs.

NOVEMBER

- 01 SC overturns blasphemy verdict against Asia Bibi; widespread protests across the country; PM talks tough about "the writ of the state".
- 02 Countrywide protests continue for the second day as govt talks to opposition and protesters; CJP justifies verdict in Asia Bibi case.
- 03 After three days of disruption, govt signs 5-point pact with TLP over Asia Bibi case.



- ** Maulana Samiul Haq murdered inside his house in Rawalpindi.
- 04 Pakistan, China sign 15 pacts as immediate relief is linked by the former to 'more negotiations'.
- 05 Unprecedented fraud detected in National Savings Scheme.
- 06 In China, PM Khan says Pakistan is an 'attractive place' for investors.
- 07 Immediate economic crisis is over, says Finance Minister Umar on return from China.
- 08 Govt confirms no troops being sent to Yemen.
- 10 Bilawal turns down govt offer to head PAC.
- 12 Over 1,000 shops demolished around Empress Market in Karachi.
- 14 After over a fortnight, missing Peshawar police officer found dead in Afghanistan.



- 15 Nawaz tells court that contrary to his earlier assertions, he never owned or ran Al-Azizia Steel.
- 16 Prolonged diplomatic tiff marks return of the martyred police officer's body from Afghanistan to Pakistan.
- ** Continuing his testimony, Nawaz denies transactions with Qatari prince.
- 17 Citing Hitler and Napoleon as bad examples, PM Imran says taking U-turns is a sign of good leadership.
- 20 PM reacts sharply to Trump's tirade against Pakistan.
- 23 Imran, Mahathir discuss 'strategic ties'.
- 24 Orakzai blast leaves 34 dead; attack on Chinese consulate in Karachi kills 4.
- 25 TLP chief Rizvi taken into 'protective custody'.
- 29 Foundation stone of Kartarpur corridor with India laid.

DECEMBER



- 03 FM Qureishi's 'googly' remarks set off 'war of tweets' with his Indian counterpart.
- 04 PM says early elections cannot be ruled out.
- 05 Govt gets ready to impose Sin Tax on cigarettes, sugary drinks.
- 06 Led by CJP and with PM in attendance, high-profile symposium discusses 'alarming population growth'.
- 07 Army warns PTM against crossing the 'red line'.
- 12 PML-N's Saad Rafique arrested ahead of Lahore bypoll; Hamza put on ECL.
- ** SSGC shuts supply to CNG, CPP sectors indefinitely.
- 13 In a wide-ranging interview to BBC, Asad Umar says it is the govt, not the IMF, making the decisions.
- 14 Govt agrees to let Shahbaz head PAC.
- 15 SBP receives second Saudi tranche.
- 16 Counter-terrorism MoU signed with China, Afghanistan.
- 18 Assisted by Pakistan for the first time, US, Taliban hold talks in UAE.
- 19 Islamabad gets ready to receive first British Airways flight after 10 years.
- ** Punjab decides to revive Basant festival after a decade-long ban.
- ** Convicted Indian spy repatriated after serving out jail term.



- 21 PTI moves ECP for Zardari's disqualification for concealing assets.
- 22 UAE confirms financial assistance for Pakistan.
- ** Imran announces decision to convert PM House into international university.
- 25 Nawaz sentenced to seven years in Al-Azizia case.
- 27 Cabinet bans furnace oil; decides to ensure gas supply.

Attention Transporters & Transport Companies

The People's Government is taking effective measures to improve Provincial Transport System. In this regard all the Transporters / Bus / Coach / Van etc owners are hereby informed that in accordance with section 3, 4, 17, 44, 39 of Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1965 and Rule 117, 224 of Motor Vehicle Rules 1969 are advised to strictly comply with the following instructions:

- Ensure availability of Emergency exit doors and removal of seats along with emergency doors.
- Equip vehicles with Fire extinguishers.
- Availability of First Aid Box.
- Keep copy of all valid documents in the Vehicle i.e. "B" Part of Route Permit/ Registration/Fitness Certificate/Driving License.
- Always Keep Complaint Book in the vehicle.
- Compliance of CNG before issuance of ticket to intercity commuters.
- Removal of folding/extra seats.
- Verification of CNIC before issuance of ticket to intercity commuter.





international

SHOCK AROUND THE GLOBE

BY MUHAMMAD ALI SIDDIQI

ONE man's murder preceded by torture and slow death seemed for once to have overshadowed larger tragedies and humanitarian disasters in the Middle East. The Syrian war entered its eighth year, and Yemen's lot was starvation and epidemic – the “stuff of nightmares”, said UN.

Jamal Khashoggi's macabre murder shocked the world. He entered the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct 2, never to be seen again. While his fiancée waited for him outside, a team of 15 Saudi commandoes used torture and murder techniques that still are a matter of conjecture. They range from a bone saw to chemicals for dissolving his body. Among his last words recorded by Turkish intelligence were, “You can't do that ... people are waiting outside ... I can't breathe.”

Was Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman personally involved in the crime? Nobody went public with this charge, but American media said CIA believed MBS was indeed the man behind the ghastly crime. MBS now enjoys absolute power and denies any involvement in the murder conspiracy. On Feb 26, in a shake-up he dismissed Military Chief of Staff Gen Abdul Rahman bin Saleh al-Bunyan, replacing him with Fayyad al-Ruwaili, besides sacking the chiefs of land forces and air defence, in addition to a number of interior ministry officials. Yet, as part of his reforms, he lifted the ban on women driving and appointed Tamadur bint Youssef al-Ramah as the first woman to become a deputy minister.

Though the reason was unfortunate, the Khashoggi murder and its strong denunciation by America and Turkey, and the ire displayed by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, served to bring Washington and Ankara closer and ease the tension which had developed over a number of issues – US policy toward the Kurdish militia in Syria, the arrest, and latter release, of American pastor Andrew Brunson, President Trump's decision to slap tariffs on Turkish imports, Ankara's missile deal with Russia, and Congressional moves to block the delivery of F-35 fighter planes to Turkey. This was in addition to the American refusal to extradite cleric Fetullah Gulen, who Erdogan believes had links with the July 2014 coup plotters.

Erdogan is now Turkey's most powerful chief executive since Kemal Ataturk, his powers flowing from a 2017 referendum that turned the Constitution into a presidential one. Last June, Erdogan won the presidential election, carting off 53 per cent of votes, his nearest rival claiming 31pc. On July 19, emergency imposed after the coup failure was lifted. But the same month also saw the sacking of nearly 19,000 state employees, including soldiers and police personnel.

While he remains the region's strongest democratically elected leader, Erdogan has made no attempt to use his influence with Riyadh and Tehran to end the Yemen conflict. UN estimates nearly 13 million people face starvation, with 50,000 children already dead. As the Saudi-led air power hit weddings, funerals and schools, peace talks in Sweden made no significant progress to end the three-year war.

While Saudi Arabia and Iran remained involved in the Yemen conflict, in May the US unilaterally walked out of the 2015 seven-power nuclear deal, and in November slapped what President Trump called



Jamal Khashoggi (left) and Mohammad bin Salman together made headlines around the world but had a radically different fate in the end.

THE KHASHOGGI MURDER SERVED TO EASE THE TENSION OVER A NUMBER OF ISSUES BETWEEN US AND TURKEY.

“toughest ever” sanctions on Iran. However, America exempted several countries, including China, Japan and India, from the sanctions.

The month of May also saw the American embassy being inaugurated in occupied Jerusalem, while in September the US administration ‘shuttered’ the Palestinian mission in Washington. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) quickly denounced the US move, calling it “the use of cheap blackmail as a political tool. The Palestinian people and leadership will not be intimidated and will not succumb to coercion.” America also cut off \$200 million in aid to Palestine to divert money to “high priority projects elsewhere.” All along the year, Israel continued to massacre Palestinians in Gaza, with the toll having crossed the 200 figure.

Even though in December 2017 Trump spoke of his “dream” to clinch an Israel-Palestinian deal, there is little chance of his success, given the Trump administration's total surrender to Israeli policies. He has virtually repudiated the two-state solution to which previous American administrations have been party.

After meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the sideline of the UN General Assembly meeting in September, Trump played with words: “I think probably two-state is more likely but if they do a single, if they do a double, I'm okay with it if they're both happy. If they're both happy, I'm okay with either. I think the two-state is more likely.”

Meanwhile, blood continued to flow in Syria, with casualties nearing the half a million mark. While the so-called Islamic State has been wiped out in Iraq, and

almost so in Syria, mass graves containing hundreds of bodies were discovered near Albu Kamal, a region once ruled by the IS. In July, an IS suicide-bomber killed 156 people, nearly 100 of them being pro-regime fighters, in Sweida city in the south. In February, in another operation to dislodge Syrian rebels from their only enclave near Damascus, an 11-day operation by government air force resulted in heavy civilian casualties in Ghouta, the UN secretary-general calling the city “hell on earth”.

The humanitarian disasters in Yemen and Syria shouldn't blind us to the savagery of the Afghan conflict, which has become the longest war in American history. While there were some hopeful peace moves, it was also the bloodiest year, with casualties likely to pass the 10,000 figure recorded for 2017.

Despite the surge in American military presence, the Taliban show no sign of defeat and exhaustion, with US estimates of their strength going up from 10,000 at the beginning of the war to 60,000 now. They also control more territory than before and have become bolder, with fierce attacks taking place virtually daily. In August the Taliban attacked Ghazni city and held it briefly before being driven out. Earlier, they penetrated into the diplomatic enclave, attacking foreign embassies and killing over 100 people. The rise of the IS's Khorasan faction has added to the ferocity of the war, with the Taliban and IS-K fighting some bloody battles. However, it was the IS-K that owned suicide bombing in Kabul's Shia neighbourhood, killing 48 people.

Mercifully, in this worsening military situation, America seems to have felt the need for abandoning its Pakistan-bashing policy. Last month, Prime Minister Imran Khan confirmed he had received a letter from President Trump seeking Islamabad's help in bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table. This was in sharp contrast to President Trump's vicious attacks on Pakistan and the aid cut-off. The letter and the visit by US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and the US-Taliban talks in Doha indicated a realisation in the US that the road to peace in Afghanistan goes through Islamabad. ■

THE NOBEL



PRIZE 2018

ECONOMIC SCIENCES

"for constructing green growth models that show how innovation and climate policies can be integrated with economic growth"

William D. Nordhaus, 77.
United States of America



Paul M. Romer, 63.
United States of America

MEDICINE

"for their discovery of cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation"

James P. Allison, 70.
United States of America



Tasuku Honjo, 76.
Japan

PHYSICS

"for inventing optical lasers that have paved the way for advanced precision instruments used in corrective eye surgery"

Arthur Ashkin, 96.
United States of America



Gerard Mourou, 74.
France

Donna Strickland, 59.
Canada



LITERATURE

The MeToo movement took its toll on the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2018 as the husband of one of the academy members faced accusations of serial sexual abuse spread over 20 years. For the first time since 1949, the Swedish Academy did not unveil a winner, instead announcing that it will reveal two laureates in 2019. Jean-Claude Arnault, a French photographer married to Katarina Frostenson was the person in focus. Arnault was found guilty by a court in Stockholm that entailed a two-year prison term. The defence was planning to file an appeal with the Sweden Supreme Court.

PEACE

"for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict"



Denis Mukwege, 63.
Democratic Republic of Congo



NADIA MURAD, 25.
Iraq

CHEMISTRY

"for applying the principles of evolution to develop proteins used in everything from new bio-fuels to the world's best-selling drug"

Frances H. Arnold, 62.
United States of America



George P. Smith, 77.
United States of America

Gregory P. Winter, 67.
United Kingdom



Modern Healthcare Facilities for Everybody, Everywhere in Sindh

**Sindh Ensures FREE, State-of-the-Art, High Quality Healthcare
Leading the way in healthcare for other provinces**

Cyberknife Radiosurgery Unit at Jinnah Post Graduate Hospital, Karachi



Highly effective cancer treatment through state-of-the-art Cyberknife Radiosurgery technology, which is minimally invasive and carries minimum side effects – The Government of Sindh is providing this extremely expensive treatment, which normally costs more than US\$ 60,000 per patient, absolutely FREE of cost to more than 5000 patients annually.

Gambat Liver & Kidney Transplant Center, Khairpur



Pakistan's most advanced liver and kidney transplant center at a cost of Rs. 3 billion, presently serving patients from all over Sindh, as well as from all over Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, with latest treatments and care for liver and kidney diseases, all FREE of cost.



National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD)

FREE global standard healthcare facilities for heart patients all over Sindh. NICVD centres established and operational in Karachi, Larkana, Tando Muhammad Khan, Hyderabad, Sehwan Sharif. Most recently, a 200-bed NICVD centre has been established in Sukkur (the 2nd biggest NICVD center after Karachi). All NICVD centers provide FREE angioplasty, pacemakers and FREE quality stents as well as all other heart related treatments to thousands of patients, absolutely free of cost.



Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Trauma Center, Civil Hospital, Karachi

Pakistan biggest and most advanced trauma center, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Trauma Center, has been established at a cost of Rs. 6 billion at Civil Hospital Karachi. It provides 24-hour emergency services to patients from Karachi and other districts of Sindh. It has neurosurgery, ICU, Eye Unit, Cardiac treatment and Face Surgery facilities in its 14 storeys, and is staffed by highly qualified medical professionals.



**Leading in Serving the People
Government of Sindh**

FREE Mobile Hospitals



FREE medicines, FREE diagnosis and FREE healthcare in villages and far-flung areas through Mobile Hospitals. Each Mobile Hospital is staffed by doctors, nurses and other medical staff, and is equipped with labs, x-ray, ultrasound, nebulisation and ECG units in addition to general and gynae surgery facilities. More than 300,000 patients have been treated and more than 100,000 lab tests conducted in over 1331 villages of Tharparkar, Dadu, Thatta, Badin, Jamshoro and Shikarpur.

Bone Marrow Transplant Unit at SIUT



- ☆ Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit established at SIUT, Karachi, at a cost of Rs. 600 million
- ☆ SIUT Sukkur established at a cost of Rs. 550 million with FREE OPD, diagnostic, dialysis and other FREE facilities
- ☆ Children Ward established at SIUT Karachi at a cost of Rs. 550 million

Sindh Immunization Support Programme

- ☆ Free vaccination against 9 fatal diseases for all children in every city, town and village of Sindh
- ☆ Increase of polio vaccination coverage from 88% to 97%, measles vaccination coverage from 72% to 86%
- ☆ Drastic reduction in polio cases
- ☆ Timely diagnosis of TB increased from 46% to 64% of cases, ratio of successful TB treatment raised from 72% to 89%

— Around 50% decrease in mother-child mortality —



Over 25,000 Lady Health Workers Regularised

More than 25,000 Lady Health Workers have been regularised on their jobs and their workplace security has been ensured at a cost of Rs. 1.5 billion, so that Lady Health Workers all over Sindh can serve the people in peace of mind.



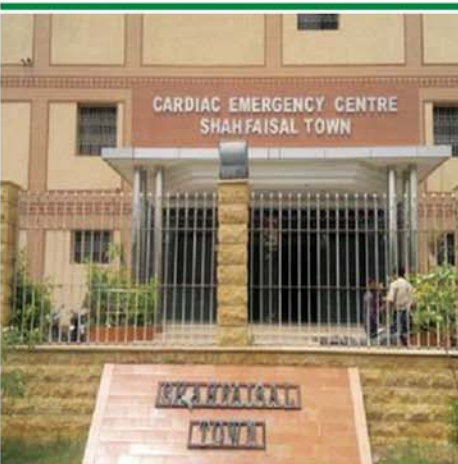
Other Major Healthcare Infrastructure & Facilities:

133 bed state-of-the-art Jacobabad Institute of Medical Sciences and 200 bed Children Hospital established in North Karachi

Modern ambulance service in 23 districts of Sindh, Advanced Emergency Center in Government Hospital Liaqatabad, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Skin Diseases Complex and Neurosciences Center in Larkana, advanced MRI and CT scan facilities in Karachi, Larkana, Nawabshah and Jamshoro, Physiotherapy Department and Orthopaedic Surgery facility in Civil Hospital Karachi, Karachi Central Blood Bank, Paediatric Center in Mirpurkhas, upgradation of Hospitals and Health Centers all over Sindh, recruitment of doctors, nurses and medical staff, establishment of several new medical colleges and provision of free healthcare and free medicines to patients all over the province.

New Hospitals, Basic and Rural Health Centers, and Specialized Health Centers All Over Sindh

TYPE OF HEALTH FACILITY	2008-09	2017-18
Teaching Hospitals	6	9
District Headquarter Hospitals	11	16
Taluka Headquarter Hospitals / Civil Hospitals	43	44
Major/ Other Hospitals	26	27
Specialized Hospitals/ Institutes	4	9
Rural health centers	125	126
Basic health units	749	783
Dispensaries	377	739
Mother and Child Health Centres	37	88
Others	78	132
Total	1,456	1,973



- ☆ Upgradation of Institute of Medical & Health Sciences at Jamshoro Taluka Hospital
- ☆ Cardiac Emergency facility at KIHD Shah Faisal Satellite
- ☆ New Cardiac Emergency Center at Landhi Karachi



All healthcare facilities in Sindh are free to avail for every resident of the province, as well as for every Pakistani

THE WORLD IN 2018

JANUARY



01

- 01 Iran upholds people's right to voice criticism in public.
- 02 Top Hollywood women launch Time's Up movement.
- 03 Seoul proposes high-level talks with Pyongyang.
- 04 Storm causes disruption across Europe.
- 05 Tony Blair favours rethink over Brexit.
- 07 Eleven Saudi princes held for palace protest.
- 08 North America in the grip of record-breaking cold; hottest day in Sydney since 1939.
- 12 Ecuador grants nationality to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.



12

- 13 Four Indian Supreme Court judges publicly slam Chief Justice in an unprecedented move.
- 15 Israeli PM in India on a six-day visit.
- 16 Guardian adopts tabloid format to cut costs.
- 17 India ends Haj subsidy.
- 19 India test-fires longest-range missile yet.
- 22 Gunmen kill 30 in Kabul hotel.



22

- 23 Oxfam report highlights seriously rising wealth disparity.
- 24 US blames Russia for chemical attacks in Syria.
- 25 Pope calls 'fake news' satanic.
- 26 France bars lawmakers from wearing religious symbols.
- 28 Bomb hidden in ambulance kills 95 in Kabul.
- ** Prince Al-Waleed released after settlement in Saudi corruption probe.
- 31 Riyadh recovers \$107bn in corruption purge.

FEBRUARY

- 01 Spectacular red-blue super moon sighted across the globe.
- 02 Sino-British ties warm up as PM May visits Beijing.
- 03 Anti-govt protests intensify in Iran; 29 women arrested.
- 05 Maldives in turmoil as president, SC go on warpath
- 06 Samsung heir Lee Jae-Yong freed in bribery case.
- 07 Wall Street recovery stabilises global markets.
- 08 SpaceX rocket blasts off towards Mars.
- 09 Khaleda Zia convicted by BD court in graft case.



09

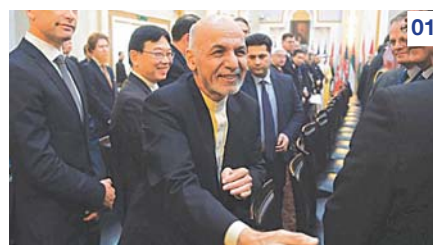
- 10 #MeToo advocate in US accused of misconduct.
- 11 New NASA record for pictures taken farthest from Earth.
- 12 The two Koreas continue to move positively in bilateral ties.
- 14 UK court revalidates warrant against Julian Assange of WikiLeaks
- 15 Taliban say they want peace in Afghanistan through talks. But attacks would continue.
- 16 Expelled student guns down 17 in a US high school.
- 17 US indicts 13 Russians for poll interference.
- 18 India, Iran sign pact over Chabahar port.
- 19 Saudi women allowed to start their own business.
- 20 Bombs kill 80 in Syria rebel enclave.
- 22 After Boko Haram attack, 90 girls go missing in Nigeria.
- 23 Riyadh to spend \$64bn over 10 years on entertainment industry.
- 24 Social media storm in Iran over headscarf.
- 25 Death toll in Syria mounts to 500 as UN delays vote on Ghouta truce.
- 26 UN calls for 30-day truce across Syria.
- ** First-ever Jazz festival kicks off in Saudi Arabia.
- 27 British folk-pop star Ed Sheeran named best-selling global artist.



27

- 28 Afghanistan-based Taliban demand direct talks with US.
- ** Syria truce fails as govt begins Ghouta air strikes.

MARCH



01

- 01 Kabul offers to recognise Taliban as a legitimate political group.
- ** Freezing cold sweeps across Europe; 46 dead.
- 02 Saudi Arabia begins issuing cinema licenses.
- 04 Controversial writer Zafar Iqbal stabbed at a Dhaka rally.
- 05 Saudi Arabia hosts first women marathon.
- 06 Shape of Water named best picture at Oscars.
- 08 Anti-Muslim commotion escalates in Sri Lanka.
- 09 Two Indonesian universities ban 'niqab' on campus
- 10 US accepts N. Korean offer on N-talks.
- 11 India, France sign key defence deal.
- 12 Chinese parliament allows Xi Jinping to be president indefinitely; first such incident since Mao Zedong.



12

- 13 Khaleda Zia granted bail by Bangladesh court.
- ** Merkel begins fourth term as German chancellor.
- 16 Indonesia makes criticising politicians a crime.
- 17 Indian singer Daler Mehndi convicted of human smuggling.
- 18 Russia, Britain expel 23 diplomats each in tit-for-tat confrontation.
- 19 Putin wins fourth term as Russian PM.
- 20 Britain, EU clinch deal on two-year Brexit transition
- 21 Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy held over Libyan funding inquiry.
- 22 Al-Azhar Grand Mufti says only state can declare jihad.
- ** France announces on-spot fines for sexual harassment.
- ** Facebook founder concedes mistakes in safeguarding user data.
- 27 US, EU expel Russian diplomats over spy row; Russia promises 'symmetrical' response.
- 28 Nato expels Russian diplomats in spy row as Russia shuts down British Council in Moscow.
- 29 After two days of speculation, China confirms N Korean leader's visit to Beijing.
- 30 US astronomers detect a galaxy devoid of dark matter.
- ** Russia hits back with tit-for-tat diplomatic action against US.
- 31 Russia expels 59 more diplomats from 23 countries.

APRIL

- 01 Over 50 British diplomats asked to leave Russia.
- ** Scientists discover 'new organ' in human body.
- 02 India kills 17 in occupied Kashmir.
- 03 US SC overturns \$655m jury award against PLO in terrorism case filed by 11 Israeli families.
- ** US, China kick off trade war with retaliatory import duties.
- 04 Saudi Crown Prince goes soft on Israel; king firmly restates official stand.
- 05 Woman attacks YouTube offices in California; kills herself.



- 07 Parliament in Malaysia dissolved; Mahathir, 92, returns to politics.
- ** S. Korea ex-president jailed for 24 years in corruption case.
- 10 France signs deal to set up a Saudi national opera and orchestra.
- 11 Russia vetoes US resolution for probe into Syria attacks. Counter-resolution voted down.
- ** Seven Myanmar soldiers penalised over Rohingya killings.
- 12 In its deadliest air crash, Algeria loses over 250 lives.
- 14 Russia blames UK for chemical attack in Syria.
- 16 Mahathir, 92, decides to contest Malaysia polls.



- 20 President Raul steps down in Cuba, bringing an end to the era of the Castro brothers.
- ** Swaziland renames itself eSwatini.
- 21 North, South Korea open top-level hotline.
- 23 Suicide-bomber at a Kabul voter registration centre claims 57 lives.
- 24 Nine die as van ploughs through Toronto pavement.
- 25 Ahead of Modi's trip to China, India refuses to back Belt and Road project.
- 26 European satellite yields first-ever 3D map of the Milky Way galaxy.
- 28 Historic summit meeting held between North and South Korea; Panmunjom Declaration signed.
- 29 US-based scientists keep brains of decapitated pigs alive for 36 hours in a controversial experiment.
- 30 N Korea promises to shut N-sites; US acknowledges "obligation to pursue peace".

MAY



- 01 On the deadliest day since 2001, suicide blasts kill 37 in Afghanistan.
- 02 UNSC envoy calls for "proper investigation" into atrocities against Rohingya in Myanmar.
- 03 WHO says India has 14 of the 100 most polluted cities in the world.
- 04 Iran threatens to quit N-deal if US walks away.
- 05 No Nobel Literature Prize this year as Swedish Academy struggles to recover from #Me Too episode.
- 06 The 200th anniversary of Karl Marx celebrated amid protests in his native town; China gifts 18-foot tall statue on the occasion.
- 07 Lebanon goes to poll for the first time in nine years.
- 08 Unofficial results suggest Hezbollah's dominance in Lebanon polls.
- 09 US withdraws from Iran N-deal; Europe not pleased.
- ** N-Korea's Kim meets Xi Jinping in China for the second time in six weeks.
- 10 Mahathir, 92, leads opposition to poll victory in Malaysia.
- 11 US-North Korea summit announced for June 12 in Singapore.
- 12 Taliban kill 30 cops in multiple attacks.
- 13 Female stars hold historic protest at Cannes film festival.
- 15 Israel kills 55 Palestinians as US opens embassy in Jerusalem.
- 16 Clouds hover over Trump-Kim summit.
- 18 Russia, China opt for stronger ties with Iran; EU treads with caution in the face of US turnaround.
- 19 Another campus shooting spree leaves eight dead in US.
- ** Plane with 104 onboard crashes in Cuba.
- 20 Britain's Prince Harry marries Meghan Markle in Windsor.



- 21 India jails ex-diplomat for passing on secrets to Pakistan.
- 24 Congress-led alliance forms government in Karnataka; BJP on the back foot.
- 27 Victory in Irish referendum for pro-choice lobby.
- 28 US warships sail near South China Sea.
- 29 India to ignore US sanctions on Iran, Venezuela.
- 30 Portugal rejects legal euthanasia.

JUNE

- 01 Study says Facebook sinking fast with US teenagers.
- 02 Al Qaeda officially warns Saudi Crown Prince over "sinful projects".
- 03 Myanmar ready to take back all 700,000 Rohingya refugees.



- 04 US, China have uneasy trade talks.
- 05 Trump asserts "absolute right" to pardon himself.
- 09 Trump headbutts Europe with call to bring back Russia into G7 fold.
- ** China honours Russia's Putin with its first-ever Friendship Medal.
- 10 Russia brushes off any chance of return to G7.
- 11 US, Allies stutter at G7 as China and Russia make merry at SCO.
- 13 Heavy on promises, light on substance, Trump, Kim meet in historic summit.
- 14 Saudi-led forces launch the biggest assault yet against Yemen.
- 15 Football World Cup gets underway in Russia.
- 16 US slaps 25pc tax on Chinese products as trade war intensifies.
- 20 BJP quits Kashmir govt.
- 21 US withdraws from UN rights body in support of Israel.
- ** Trump takes a U-turn on tough immigrant policy.
- 23 Another gang-rape shocks India.
- 24 London rally demands new Brexit vote.



- 25 Erdogan claims poll victory in Turkey.
- ** Saudi women hit the road as driving ban is finally lifted.
- 26 Prince William becomes the first British royal to visit Israel.
- 27 Global survey declares India the 'most dangerous country' for women.
- ** US apex court upholds Trump travel ban on five Islamic countries.
- 28 Putin agrees to meet Trump "in a third country".
- 29 Russian strikes kill 22 in Syria as Finland gets ready to host Putin-Trump summit.
- 30 UN migration agency snubs Trump nominee.

MOTORCYCLES

Wearing helmet is a

Among road accidents that prove fatal or have high injury rate, motorcycle accidents are the most common. To ensure the safety of the people, the Government of Sindh has issued a directive (to the driver and pillion rider) to wear helmet and use proper driving techniques. Moreover, one wheeling has been prohibited with immediate effect. Failure to comply with these provisions will result in a fine or punishment up to a prison sentence of six months.



All motorcyclists should wear helmets.
Have rear view mirrors on your motorcycle.
Fine or punishment in case of non-compliance.



Ladies must also wear a helmet.



CYCLISTS

absolutely necessary

...ury rate, the ratio of motorcycle accidents is 60 percent.
...ndh has made it mandatory for motorcyclists (both driver
...have rear view mirror on their bikes.
...diate effect and anybody found violating the law is liable
...2 years or fine, or both.

Wearing a helmet is mandatory for
drivers and the pillion rider.

One wheeling is strictly prohibited.
Any one violating the law will face
fine, imprisonment or both.

**Parents are requested to discourage
their children from one wheeling.**



Wear a Helmet - Stay Safe

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER



- 01 Mass rallies held across US against immigration policy.
- 02 Jalalabad suicide attack leaves 19 dead.
- 03 Iranian President begins European tour in the wake of US pullout from N-deal.
- 04 Former Malaysian PM Najib Razak held in graft case.
- 05 Cambodia restores rail link to Thailand after 45 years.
- 06 Mother Teresa charity in India accused of 'selling babies'. One shelter home sealed.
- 07 Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China back Iran over N-deal. US isolated.
- 08 No unilateral disarmament, N Korea tells US.
- 09 Japan rain toll hits 81.
- 10 British govt in turmoil as two ministers resign over Brexit row.
- 11 After an 18-day ordeal 12 footballers aged 11-16 years and their coach rescued in Thailand from a labyrinth of caves in peak monsoon season.
- ** China allows widow of 2010 Nobel dissident Liu Xiaobo.
- 12 OIC-led congregation of 100 clerics plead for peace in Afghanistan.
- 14 Amid demonstration in London, Trump, in Britain, retracts his earlier critical statements, says ties "between the two countries have never been stronger".
- 15 After London, 'Baby Donald' protests mark Trump's visit to Scotland.
- 16 France crowned champions as Football World Cup ends in Russia.
- ** On the eve of his summit meeting with Putin, Trump calls Russia "a foe" alongside EU and China.
- 17 Trump meets Putin; completely buys the latter's "powerful" denial of any interference in US polls; calls US findings to the contrary a "disaster".
- 18 Amid backlash at home, Trump, back from the summit, takes U-turn, saying he "misspoke" at the joint press conference with Putin.
- 19 EU fines Google \$5bn for 'squeezing out rivals'.
- 20 Israel officially becomes "nation state of the Jewish people".
- 21 Modi defeats No-Trust motion by a big margin.
- 23 Indian Muslims feel alarmed as govt prepares National Register of Citizens.
- 24 Unprecedented heatwave torments Japan.



- 26 Under pressure from Beijing, US airlines agree to mention Taiwan as 'part of China'.
- 27 Syrian flag raised after four years on border with Israel.
- 28 In a rare trip to N. Korea, US plane brings back war remains in 55 boxes.

- 01 French govt survives no-trust vote.
- 02 Iran rebuffs Trump's talks offer as a "PR stunt".
- 03 Trump tells AG to end Russia probe, calling it "a disgrace".
- 04 Turkey, US in row over detention of a pastor.
- 05 Political uncertainty hits Zimbabwe after first post-Mugabe elections.
- 06 Europe continues to sizzle amid record heatwave.
- 07 Saudi Arabia freezes ties with Canada over diplomatic row.
- ** US re-imposes Iran sanctions.
- 09 Australia declares New South Wales "entirely in drought" as dry spell lingers on.



- 10 Germany lifts ban on Nazi symbols in video games.
- 11 UN panel says China holding a million Uighur Muslims in secret camps; China declines comment.
- 12 US-Turkey ties hit rock bottom over detained pastor, tariff hike and currency crash.
- 13 Nasa launches unmanned spacecraft to "touch Sun".
- 14 In a move to counter China, US revives military ties with Sri Lanka.
- 15 Suspected terror attack outside UK parliament leaves three dead.
- 16 Israel reopens Gaza crossing.
- 17 Canada reaches out to Western allies to help resolve dispute with Saudi Arabia.
- 18 US stops funding Syria reconstruction projects.
- 20 India flood toll hits 370.
- 21 Haj performed by 2.4m people.
- 22 Bahrain stops issuing visas to Qataris.
- 25 In a divisive move, new Spanish govt decides to move the remains of Francisco Franco from the vast mausoleum near Madrid.
- 26 Iran in talks with Russia over N-Plant.
- 27 On a trip to Dublin, Pope Francis acknowledges abuse in clergy ranks.



- 28 UN calls for prosecution of Myanmar general over Rohingya genocide.
- 29 Germany hit by xenophobia as far-right take to the streets in massive numbers.
- ** In a nationwide swoop, India arrests, questions intellectuals, activists; Arundhati Roy calls it "a coup against Constitution".
- 30 Indian SC stays govt action against intellectuals.
- 31 Caricature contest in Holland cancelled after protests by the Muslim world.



- 01 Around 200 hurt as Palestinians protest against Israeli land seizure.
- 02 Palestinians react with anger to US decision to stop funding UN agency for refugees.
- 03 Row over anti-Semitism definition hit British politics.
- 04 British PM under Brexit cloud.
- 05 Spain cancels arms sales to Saudi Arabia amid Yemen concerns.
- 06 Typhoon Jebi, the most powerful in 25 years, hits western Japan.
- 07 Major earthquake rocks northern Japan.
- ** India legalises LGBT rights.
- 08 Russia, Turkey, Iran fail to agree on Syria truce.
- 09 Death penalty for 75 in Egypt over 2013 protests.
- 10 N. Korea showcases 'economy' rather than 'nuclear arsenal' at a major military parade.



- 11 UN HR chief takes on China over large-scale 're-education camps' in Muslim-majority Xinjiang.
- 12 US denies giving waiver to India over oil, trade with Iran.
- 13 Suicide attack leaves 68 dead in Afghanistan.
- 14 Private airline in Saudi Arabia decides to hire female pilots, flight attendants.
- ** China says it is "educating, not mistreating" its Muslims.
- 15 Trump aide pleads guilty; promises to help Russia probe.
- ** US shuts down Palestinian mission in Washington.
- 16 Super typhoon hits Philippines; several dead.
- 17 Amid lingering war and gloom, Syrians in govt-held areas vote in local elections.
- 18 Time magazine sold for \$190m.
- 19 With Chinese retaliatory steps, trade war with US intensifies further.
- 20 Ethnic violence claims 60 lives in Ethiopia.
- 21 Spain says Trump wants to it to "build a wall across Sahara".
- 23 Rafale row hits India hard as opposition asks PM Modi to resign.
- ** Attack on military parade in Tehran leaves 29 dead.
- 25 Google celebrates 20th birthday.
- 26 US, Iran exchange threats, insults at UN General Assembly.
- 27 At the UN Security Council, Trump lashes out at Iran, China.
- 28 Adultery is not a crime, declares Indian SC.
- 29 Security breach hits 50 million Facebook accounts.
- 30 US Senate delays vote on controversial Kavanaugh.

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER



- 01** Earthquake, tsunami leave 800 dead in Indonesia.
02 Iran fires missiles at Jihadists in Syria.
03 US, Chinese warships come within yards in South China Sea.
04 Saudi journalist Khashoggi goes missing from Saudi consulate in Istanbul.
****** Trump says Saudi monarchy may not last "for two weeks" without US support.
05 Western capitals accuse Russia of involvement in cybercrimes.
06 France-based Interpol chief held in Beijing.
07 Saudi Crown Prince says he "loves" working with Trump despite the latter's critical remarks.
****** Controversial nominee Justice Kavanaugh wins a tight US Senate vote for Supreme Court nomination.
10 Indonesia tsunami toll moves past 2,000; Jakarta orders foreign aid workers to leave, saying their help was not needed.
11 China includes 'vocational training centres' in its campaign against Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang.



- 12** Malaysia defies China; sends 11 Uighur detainees to Turkey.
13 Turkey releases jailed American pastor.
14 Disgraced former PM Anwar Ibrahim wins by-election in Malaysia.
15 German Chancellor Merkel suffers electoral losses in Bavaria.
16 Syria reopens crossings with Jordan, Golan Heights.
21 Saudi Arabia admits journalist Khashoggi was killed in its Istanbul consulate.
22 Jordan says it will not extend land deal with Israel.
24 As Saudi King, Crown Prince meet Khashoggi family, Turkey PM calls for Saudi heads to roll for the "planned, savage killing" of the journalist.
26 Number of Trump opponents receiving 'mail bombs' hit. 10, including Obama, Hillary, Biden and Soros.
****** Saudi Arabia admits Khashoggi murder "appear to have been premeditated"; Turkey wants all questions answered.
27 Political turmoil in Sri Lanka as President sacks PM.
28 White gunmen attacks synagogue in US; eight dead, 12 injured.
30 Israeli minister visits mosque in the UAE.

- 03** Kabul upset over Russian invitation to Afghan leaders for talks with Taliban.
04 First UN trucks reach remote parts in Syria.
05 New Caledonia votes against independence from France.
06 Constitutional crisis worsens in Sri Lanka.
08 Democrats get House majority in US midterm polls; Republicans hold on to Senate majority.



- 09** Trump dismisses attorney-general in the wake of Democratic majority in the House.
10 Taliban attend Moscow meeting, but refuse to negotiate with Kabul.
11 Turkey shares Khashoggi recordings with US, Saudi Arabia, others.
12 Alibaba smashes its own Singles' Day record with sales worth over \$30bn inside 24 hours.
13 California wildfire kills 31; 200 missing.
14 CNN sues White House for revoking press credentials of a journalist.
15 Suu Kyi remains rigid in the face of US, Malaysian criticism over Rohingya crisis.
16 Saudi prosecutor seeks death penalty for 5 in Khashoggi case; Crown Prince stands exonerated.
17 Judiciary asks White House to restore CNN journalist's access pass
18 Deadliest wildfire in a hundred years leaves 73 dead, over a thousand missing in California.
19 US expects Afghan peace deal within months.
20 Britain, Iran hold N-talks.
23 UN says greenhouse gases at record high levels in the atmosphere.
24 Afghanistan blast kills 27 soldiers.
25 Anti-govt protests disrupt life in Paris.



- 26** Brexit deal signed; Britain to walk free on March 29, 2019.
29 Afghanistan names team to hold to talks with Taliban.
30 China halts activities of the gene-editing scientist.



- 01** Fresh Russia-linked scandal dogs Trump at G20 summit as Putin makes waves interacting with Saudi Crown Prince.
02 Violence returns to Paris streets as anti-govt demonstrations continue.
03 French govt caves in; agrees to hold talks with protestors.
05 US says violation of treaties by Iran, China and Russia no longer acceptable.
07 Top Chinese corporate executive arrested in Canada 'on US request'; Beijing calls it a 'human rights violation'.
08 US, Canadian govts distance themselves from the arrest of Chinese telecom executive.
10 UN says \$2.6 trillion are lost to corruption every year which equates 5pc of global GDP.
11 Oman has allowed use of airspace, says Israeli PM.
12 Former Canadian diplomat arrested in Beijing in what appears to be an intensifying bilateral spat.
13 Trump aide sentenced to three-year term for campaign finance irregularities.
14 Theresa May survives no-trust vote within the Conservative Party over Brexit row.



- 15** First ever commercial aircraft with two pilots on board briefly enter space.
17 UN calls for 'credible' Khashoggi murder probe.
18 Britain sets January date for delayed Brexit vote in parliament.
19 No one can dictate China, warns President Xi.
****** Crisis hits Belgium as PM resigns after disintegration of the ruling coalition.
20 US has defeated ISIS, says Trump; govt announces decision to "full withdraw" from Syria.
21 Drones bring London's Gatwick Airport to standstill.
22 US Defence Secretary James Mattis resigns over US decision to withdraw fully from Syria and partially from Afghanistan.
23. US govt in partial shutdown over tiff with Congress.
24. Volcano, tsunami leave over 200 dead in Indonesia.
26. Indonesia toll inches towards 450.
27. Israel plans to move ahead with settlements.

FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLLED



**MUSHTAQ
YUSUFI**



**ASMA
JAHANGIR**



**GEORGE
H.W. BUSH**



**FAHMIDA
RIAZ**



**STEPHEN
HAWKING**



**ATAL BIHARI
VAJPAYEE**

► JANUARY

- 04 Zubaida Tariq, 72.** Television personality and a household name known for traditional recipes and remedies.
- 05 Asghar Khan, 97.** Respected name in national politics and a former chief of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF).
- ** Rasa Chughtai, 89.** Eminent Urdu poet who inspired many with his poetry that was both lyrical and thoughtful.
- 19 Saqi Faruqi, 81.** Leading name in Urdu literature who was known as much for the controversies he kicked up as for his modernist poetry.
- Munoo Bhai, 84.** A leading journalist and poet who was a household name nationwide for his television plays.
- 24 Mohammad Azam Saigol, 68.** Noted industrialist.

► FEBRUARY

- 11 Asma Jahangir, 66.** An iconic lawyer, activist and champion of human rights and freedom of expression.
- ** Qazi Wajid, 87.** Renowned television and radio personality who portrayed a whole spectrum of characters with professional ease and aplomb.

► MARCH

- 01 Mahmud Sipra, 75.** Film-maker and businessman who produced films, most notably The Jigsaw Man, a 1983 British movie featuring Laurence Olivier and Michael Caine.
- 05 Jam Saqi, 74.** Veteran leftist politician.
- 14 Stephen Hawking, 70.** Theoretical physicist who kept at bay his physical condition to unravel the marvels of science.
- 31 Anis Mirza, 90.** Senior journalist who covered parliamentary proceedings in her own inimitable way and 'dared to look into politicians' eyes'

► APRIL

- 02 Ahmed Khaled Tawfik Farraag, 55.** Egyptian author and physician known for being the first contemporary writer of horror, science fiction and medical thrillers in the Arab world.
- 13 Jan Tomas Forman, 86.** Czech-American film professional known, among other accomplishments, for directing Oscar-winning hits like One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975) and Amadeus (1984).
- 25 Madeeha Gauhar, 61.** Activist and popular theatre personality who founded Ajoka Theatre.

► MAY

- 12 Mansoor Ahmed, 50.** Celebrated Olympian goalkeeper and 1994 Hockey World Cup hero.
- 20 Bernard Lewis, 101.** Eminent scholar of Middle Eastern history.
- 22 Philip Milton Roth, 85.** Celebrated American author who blurred the line between fact and fiction with intensely autobiographical characters set around his birthplace New Jersey.

► JUNE

- 03 Mohammad Umar Memon, 79.** Distinguished translator, short story writer, critic, researcher and Professor Emeritus at University of Wisconsin.
- 05 Rasool Bux Palijo, 88.** An icon of Sindhi nationalist politics who was a scholar, lawyer, historian and author of several books who penned multilingual poetry.
- 20 Mushtaq Ahmad Yusufi, 94.** A banker by profession, he was arguably the leading name in modern Urdu literary prose.
- 21 Jamsheed Marker, 96.** Career diplomat who represented the country in some of the toughest capitals around the world. Alongside Omar Kureishi, he was also the pioneer of live cricket commentary in Pakistan.

► JULY

- 03 Rajmata Krishna Kumari, 92.** The last reigning Maharani of Marwar-Jodhpur in India.
- 06 Kimishige Ishizaka, 92.** Japanese immunologist who discovered the antibody class IgE.
- 08 Saleem Shahzad, 62.** Former MQM MNA.

► AUGUST

- 12 Sir V.S. Naipaul, 85.** British Nobel Laureate author who was famously outspoken about his controversial views.
- 17 Atal Bihari Vajpayee, 93.** Indian prime minister associated with the right-wing BJP who seriously interacted with two Pakistani governments regarding regional peace.
- 18 Kofi Annan, 80.** The only black African to head the United Nations.
- 23 Kuldip Nayar, 95.** Indian journalist who was one of the loudest voices regarding peace with Pakistan.
- 25 Senator John McCain, 82.** A Vietnam war veteran who turned to politics and was the Republican Presidential nominee in 2008 elections.

► SEPTEMBER

- 06 Burt Reynolds, 82.** Emmy winner American actor well known for movies like Smokey and the Bandit, Boogie Nights, Deliverance etc.
- 07 Nisar Mohammad Khan, 78.** Noted Pashto film playwright who was also known for his long association with Radio Pakistan.
- ** Marcelite J. Harris, 75.** First black woman to rise to the rank of general in the US Air Force.
- 11 Begum Kulsoom Nawaz, 68.** Wife of former prime minister Mian Nawaz Sharif.

► OCTOBER

- 01 Charles Aznavour, 94.** French singer and songwriter known as one of his country's most popular and enduring musicians. Having sold 180 million records in his life, he was dubbed France's Frank Sinatra.
- 02 Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi, 59.** US-based Saudi journalist whose death in Saudi Consulate in Istanbul records a global uproar.
- 06 Tahir Chaudhry, 40s.** Chef and television presenter.
- 24 Baba Haider Zaman, 86.** Chairman of Tehreek-i-Sooba Hazara who got nationwide fame in the wake of Abbottabad riots in 2010.

► NOVEMBER

- 02 Maulana Samiul Haq, 81.** Former senator and chief of his own faction of the Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islam who was known for influence with the Taliban.
- 04 Sardar Khalid Ibrahim, 71.** Veteran Kashmiri leader and chief of Jammu Kashmir People's Party (JKPP).
- 18 Haji Abdul Wahab, 96.** Head of the Tableeghi Jamaat in Pakistan.
- 22 Fahmida Riaz, 72.** One of leading feminist voices in Urdu poetry who also indulged in translations and fiction writing.
- 29 Altaf Fatima, 91.** Eminent writer of Urdu fiction.

► DECEMBER

- 01 George H.W. Bush, 94.** Former US president who guided the country through the end of the Cold War into the New World Order.
- 18 Ali Ejaz, 77.** Veteran Pakistani TV and film personality.
- 25 Ali Raza Abedi, 46.** Former MNA who had recently resigned from the basic membership of MQM.



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